



# THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

## Hackles Raised Over New Dog Park Policy

By Erin O'Briant

Dog owners in Noe Valley are growling at the San Francisco Recreation and Park Commission for passing a tough leash law in early May. But officials say the new law will lead to more off-leash space for local dogs—if canine and human residents will just be patient.

The new policy states that in any park less than 10 acres in size, off-leash dogs must be kept in a separate area—and that area must be at least 10,000 square feet, about the size of 1½ tennis courts. In spaces larger than 10 acres, such as Dolores Park at 18th and Dolores streets, off-leash areas must be designated, but they are not required to be fenced in. Laws for on-leash dogs remain unchanged.

According to Recreation and Park spokesperson Becky Ballinger, over the next three months, the city will work with members of the community, including dog owners, to decide whether a dog run is appropriate for each park smaller than 10 acres and, if so, where it should be.

Ballinger maintains that "the whole point [of the new policy] is to provide more legitimate off-leash space to prevent conflict in the parks." No tickets for off-leash dogs will be issued for 90 days, she says, and that grace period may be extended if neighbors have not been able to agree on appropriate dog spaces.

But some dog owners are eyeing the

## A Few Dreadful Minutes with Lemony Snicket

Stop! If You Can't Bear the Truth About This Reclusive Children's Book Author

By Olivia Boler

If you believe in the existence of Lemony Snicket, then you should not read this interview. I hate to break it to you, but he's about as real as Santa Claus.

The man behind the nom de plume who writes *A Series of Unfortunate Events*, the children's books that chronicle with Gothic goosebumps the trials and tribulations of the Baudelaire orphans, is none other than San Francisco's native son, Daniel Handler.

Handler, 32, and I happened to attend the same high school in the late 1980s, and he was hard to miss back then. In his senior year, he was voted not only Class Clown, but also Best Actor, Chatterbox, and Teacher's Pet. In our school's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, he played Oberon to my Courtesan No. 2.

Handler's first novel, *The Basic Eight*, was published in 1999 by St. Martin's Press and is—ahem!—loosely based on Lowell High School (loosely, because I don't recall Handler being a teenage girl, nor murdering any of his friends). His



These upstanding canine citizens are lucky their guardian is willing to escort them to Upper Noe Recreation Center. Under a Rec and Park policy adopted last month, the 30th Street park may be the only official area in Noe Valley where dogs can run free.

Photo by Pomelo Gerard

new policy with suspicion. "What this means is that the only choice the community has for those [small] parks is to either put in a fenced run or have no off-leash recreation in that park at all," says San Francisco Dog Owners Group spokesperson and former Noe Valley resident Laura Cavaluzzo.

Right now, the only place Noe Valley residents can let their dogs off-leash legally is Upper Noe Recreation Center at 30th and Sanchez streets, which has a fenced-in dog run. It is one of only four parks in the city with a fenced area set aside for dogs.

Ballinger says she believes Noe Valley's biggest park—Douglass Park, at Dou-

glas and 27th streets—is still less than 10 acres in size, so a dog run will be needed for off-leash recreation there. Like many Noe Valley dog owners, Ballinger does not consider Douglass' current dog run usable, due to the steep, dangerous cliffs that border the run. She suggests that a sitting wall might work well to create a designated dog area at Douglass Park.

As for Noe Courts at Douglass and 24th streets, a fenced-in area would have to be added if dog owners want to let their canines frolic in the park.

A decision about each of the neighbor-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



*The Bad Beginning*, published in 1999, is the first in the Lemony Snicket series, local author Daniel Handler's tongue-in-cheek tale about three perennially imperiled orphans. The books are illustrated by New York artist Brett Helquist.

second novel, *Watch Your Mouth*, was published in 2000.

However, it is the Lemony Snicket series, starting with *The Bad Beginning* in 1999, that has brought Handler the most fame. In fact, in a May 26 story in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, writer Vicki Haddock demanded, "[Who is] this overwrought writer whose tragicomic chronicles...have sold more than 4 million copies, developed an adult cult following, and knocked Harry Potter off the top of

the bestseller list?" His latest book, *The Unauthorized Autobiography of Lemony Snicket* (HarperCollins), came out last month, and Daniel Handler will be at A Clean Well-Lighted Place for Books on June 22 at 2 p.m., to greet Lemony Snicket's devoted fans, many of whom live in Noe Valley.

I spoke to Daniel in mid-May, soon after he and his wife, Lisa Brown, moved from their Richmond District apartment into a gorgeous 1907 Victorian in Ashbury Heights. I admit that I forced a few high school reminiscences on the poor guy, but we touched on some Lemony topics as well.

**Olivia Boler:** You came up with the pen name of Lemony Snicket when you were researching right-wing groups for your first adult novel, *The Basic Eight*, right?

**Daniel Handler:** "Researching right-wing groups" is a pretty grand way of putting it. I was calling them and getting free stuff from them, which I thought was hilarious, and I could then quote or paraphrase [one of their statements] and put it into the novel for the purpose of making such commentators look stupid.

I was looking at some religious groups and right-wing groups for their take on what was wrong with the youth of America, but I did not want to be permanently on the mailing list of some of these nefarious organizations—particularly the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

## Funeral School Breathes Its Last At Reilly's, But Condos Revived

By Corrie M. Anders

Goodbye, mortuary chums. So long, new condos at 29th and Dolores streets. The eulogies seemed appropriate late last year as the intertwined fates of a funeral school and a proposed condo development all but slipped six feet under.

Indeed, the life and good times of the San Francisco College of Mortuary Science are over in this city. The revered, 72-year-old private funeral school has succumbed to an unnatural death caused by San Francisco's exorbitant economics.

After the last class graduates on June 8, the college will close down its campus at the Reilly Co./Goodwin & Scannell Funeral Home at 1598 Dolores Street. The school will then merge with a community college in Sacramento, where the financial environment is more accommodating for both students and faculty.

"We're in our waning days, so I'm

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

## City CarShare Still Looking for Two Spots in Noe Merchants Reluctant to Share Public Parking Lot

By Kathy Dalle-Molle

City CarShare, the popular nonprofit service that rents cars by the hour to its members, wants to come to Noe Valley. Residents want the program, too. So do many merchants. The only thing keeping CarShare out of the neighborhood is finding a place to park the rental vehicles.

Typically, the San Francisco Department of Parking and Traffic (DPT) donates two or more spaces in city-owned garages or lots for CarShare to keep its vehicles. Right now, for instance, five CarShare vehicles are available in the Mission parking garage on 21st Street at Bartlett, another three in the Kzar lot at the corner of Frederick and Stanyan in the Haight, and five more in the public garage at Fifth and Mission streets.

Unfortunately, in Noe Valley the only public parking lot is the narrow one between Radio Shack and Le Zinc on the 4000 block of 24th Street. While the 15-space lot is an option for CarShare, it's an unlikely one, because it has already been met with opposition from merchants and neighborhood groups.

"Taking two spaces from that tiny lot would have a big impact," says Dave Monks, who heads up the residents' group Friends of Noe Valley. "There is such limited parking in the neighborhood as it is."

Kathy Zucchi, president of the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association, concurs. "We're not opposed to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



**LOOKING UP.** It's a sunny day on Church Street, and two members of the next great Noe Valley generation, Jasmine Moser (left) and Chloe Coyle, stride with unaffected smiles past our wide-angle lens. No worries in this moment. No counting. No taking stock. Just a simple demonstration of the ease with which we get along. *Photo by Najib Joe Hakim*

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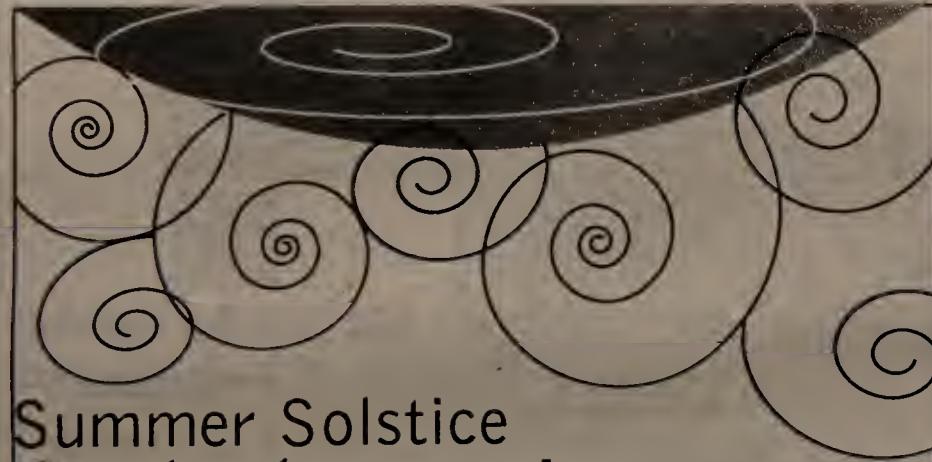
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# Kathy Zucchi Cheers For Noe Valley—Where Everybody Knows Your Name

By Kathy Dalle-Molle

Kathy Zucchi, the new president of the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association, says only about 28 percent of neighborhood businesses currently belong to her organization, but she'd love to see 100 percent participation.

So how does Zucchi, who took the helm on March 27, hope to achieve that goal?

"Well, I plan on starting with the rack," she deadpans, "you know, a little torture."

Actually, Zucchi, who lives on 25th Street and runs the Noe Valley branch of Edward Jones Investments on Diamond Street near 24th,

**"I'd love to see a Williams-Sonoma store here, because we don't have a store like that in Noe Valley. But is that something the neighborhood wants?"**

Kathy Zucchi  
President, Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association

"I hear through the grapevine complaints about business being down for some merchants, and I think we need to work on being pro-

active and turning the situation around, not just complaining," she says. "For instance, I'd like to organize a seminar with SCORE [a nonprofit association that aids small businesses]. Also, there's a lot of grant money out there for small businesses, and I'd like to see some of our businesses try to get that."

"It would be great if we could get some grant money just to clean up the sidewalks," she continues, "and even if we can't, I'd like us all to be aware of the little things that we can do to make the neighborhood better, even just stepping outside of your store or office to pick up trash."

Zucchi also wants to promote events that have a positive impact on shopping in the neighborhood, such as the Merchants' annual Sidewalk Sale, which this year takes place on Saturday, June 29, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

And she's toying with the idea of a Noe Valley Street Fair.

"The fair is just in the crawling stage," Zucchi says, "but we would want something low-key and on a small scale, which wouldn't block traffic in the neighborhood. I'd also like it to be more tasteful than the other street fairs in the city."



Kathy Zucchi, of Edward Jones Investments on Diamond Street, now holds the reins of the Noe Valley Merchants Association (as well as that of her two pugs, Chelsea and Cleo).

Photo by Pamela Gerard

She also would love to hear what Noe Valley residents want from their neighborhood merchants.

"I'd love to see a Williams-Sonoma store here," she says, "because we don't have a store like that in Noe Valley. But is that something the neighborhood wants? I'd like Noe Valley to be thought of as a destination neighborhood. I want people from other parts of the city to come here and spend money. I know I go to other neighborhoods and spend money. We need to create a compelling reason for people to come here. If we don't, they won't come."

Zucchi says the association welcomes all merchants and professionals working within the boundaries of 21st to 30th Street and Fair Oaks to Grand View. Dues are \$75 per year. "By virtue of numbers, we can get a lot accomplished," she says.

Of 455 eligible businesses, only 130 currently belong to the organization. Most are on 24th Street, Noe Valley's largest commercial strip, but membership

along Church Street is growing.

Although she doesn't plan to serve as president for five terms like her predecessor Bob Roddick ("maybe two years, if I can do it without going insane"), Zucchi nonetheless loves the neighborhood.

"Noe Valley has the nicest people and the best weather," she says, "and there's just something so familiar about the place. It reminds me of the small town I grew up in—Kirksville, Missouri. I walk down the street, and I see my clients and friends and other merchants. It's sort of like the *Cheers* effect from the TV show—you know, everybody knows my name. We're in a big city, but we have this small community, Noe Valley, which just feels like home."

The next meeting of the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association will be held on Aug. 28 at 9 a.m. at the Bank of America at 24th and Castro. For more information about joining, contact Kathy Zucchi at 282-4079. □

## episode

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## Two Parking Spaces And CarShare Will Be Ready to Ride

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the concept of City CarShare," she says. "We don't want to be unreasonable, but that lot is our only public parking lot in Noe Valley. Our retail businesses count on turnover of parking spaces to survive."

On behalf of the Merchants Association, Zucchi last month wrote a letter to District 8 Supervisor Mark Leno, Mayor Willie Brown, and City CarShare, stating that "we want you to be aware that we do not want these cars parked in our ONLY parking lot on 24th Street."

In the letter, she suggested possible alternative sites for CarShare. "James Lick Middle School uses their large playground as a parking lot for City College students every night. Several of the churches in the neighborhood, including St. Philip's and St. Paul's and St. James', have parking lots that might be available," Zucchi wrote.

Monks thinks a few other options need to be explored as well, such as on-street parking or securing spots in the still-to-be-built Noe Valley Ministry lot, in the former Dan's Auto at 3861 24th Street.

"We all agree that the CarShare idea has merit," Monks says, "but City CarShare needs to consult with the merchants and the neighborhood groups. I believe a place can be found, but we want to have a thorough discussion of the situation before they take over any parking in the neighborhood."

Both DPT and City CarShare respond that they are sympathetic to the merchants' and residents' concerns.

Scott Ruble, manager of the DPT unit that operates the city-owned garages and lots, told the *Voice* that earlier this year DPT earmarked two spots for City CarShare in the 24th Street lot. However, when it ran into opposition from Eureka Valley merchants and residents about providing spaces in a similar public lot at 18th and Castro streets, DPT decided to back off on the 24th Street plan.

"We learned from [the 18th Street] experience that we have to talk to folks first before we do anything," Ruble admits. "That's why we put plans for CarShare going into the 24th Street lot on hold."

Ruble says DPT and CarShare hadn't been doing neighborhood outreach previously because the program had been using large garages, such as the one at 21st and Bartlett, where there were "plenty of spots available."

"We now realize that the situation with the lots is different than with the garages," he says.

Although Ruble maintains that Eureka Valley is now happy to have two CarShare cars in the 18th Street lot, he accepts that Noe Valley may want to keep its 24th Street lot intact. "We realize that that lot is very highly valued by the small business owners and residents and shoppers in the neighborhood."

Ruble says his department hopes to meet soon with the Noe Valley groups.

City CarShare outreach manager Annie Bourdon is also eager to get moving. "We've wanted to be in Noe Valley for a really long time," she says. "I used to live

in Noe Valley, and I think CarShare is ideal for the neighborhood. We have lots and lots of members from Noe Valley and lots of requests from neighbors to have CarShare in Noe Valley."

The year-old group, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation and local grants, is looking for spaces that will accommodate at least two vehicles, a Volkswagen Beetle and a Jetta station wagon.

"But we don't want to step on anyone's toes," says Bourdon. "We're going to be patient and calm. We understand how tiny the lot on 24th Street is and that parking

is a huge issue in Noe Valley. Wherever we do land in Noe Valley, we hope to help the parking situation in the neighborhood."

Bourdon says she "would love to hear suggestions from anyone in Noe Valley about potential spaces for CarShare. We're willing to be as innovative as possible."

For information on City CarShare or to suggest a site for cars in Noe Valley, contact Annie Bourdon at [annie@citycarshare.org](mailto:annie@citycarshare.org) or by phone at 415-995-8589. You can also visit City CarShare's web site at [www.citycarshare.org](http://www.citycarshare.org). □

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## Dog Owners Sniff At New Leash Law

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hood's parks, says Ballinger, will be left to members of the surrounding community.

Ballinger stresses that Rec and Park does not want to create dog runs by installing unsightly chain-link fences. "The barriers could be a hedge, a sitting wall, benches—just some kind of clear delineation," she says.

The department's garden staff is evaluating all potential off-leash sites, she adds, and will make suggestions for creating attractive off-leash areas.

Meanwhile, the Rec and Park staff is drafting a brochure that will explain the new law and how neighbors can submit proposals for off-leash areas. According to Ballinger, the department's general manager is also creating an advisory committee on the issue.

Still, dog owners feel locked out. "The minimal size of these pens is 10,000 square feet, so the smaller parks won't have room for them," says Cavaluzzo. "Nobody wants to give over three-quarters of a park to only dog use."

Her SFDOG group advocates a time-share arrangement or other accommodation instead of designating areas specifically for off-leash dogs, she says. "We don't want separate little facilities that take common park areas that get shared over the course of the day—we don't want those to be turned into single-use, dog-only spaces," Cavaluzzo says. "There isn't enough park land in San Francisco for that."

"I think there are some parks that probably are not suitable for off-leash areas," Ballinger responds. "I think that can be accommodated by other area parks."

If a quick survey of local parks in mid-



"Gumbo" and friends enjoyed a few minutes of unfettered play on 24th Street this April. But this fall, when the city starts enforcing a new dog park policy, he will have to wear a leash while walking in Noe Valley, except when he's in an area set aside for dogs. Photo by Pormela Gerard

May is any indication, many Noe Valley dog owners will turn up their nose at the new rules.

"I'd rather take the ticket than put my dogs on a leash all the time," says 21st Street resident Annette Santiago, who walks her dogs Ashley and Rosa at both Douglass and Dolores parks.

Noe Valley dog trainer Aishe Berger, who often walks her dog Lola at Noe Courts, agrees. "I am an outlaw. I always carry a leash; I'm a 'defensive dog driver,' meaning I look out for any potential

problems between my dog and others. And I'll put her on a leash to protect her and others. But for her quality of life, I am not going to leash her in the parks. It's cruel."

A woman walking a large dog at Douglass Park says she, too, has no plans to leash her canine. "I don't think anything much will change. The cops will just come by to make sure everything is okay," she says.

However, Ballinger asks local dog owners to give Rec and Park's policy a

chance. "Let us move forward. Don't assume you already know what this will look like before we try to do it."

For a copy of the new policy and more information, visit <http://parks.sfgov.org> or call the Recreation and Park Department at 831-2750. □



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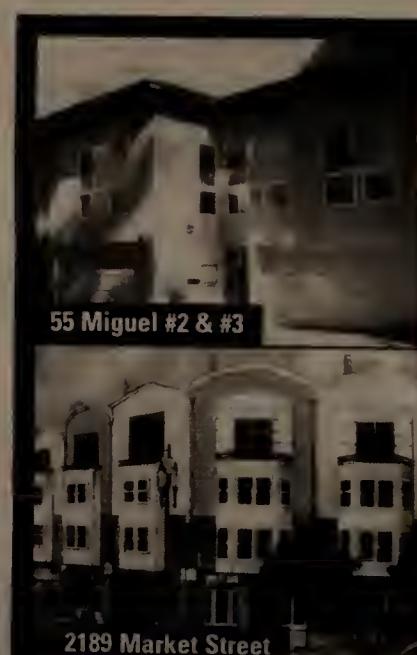
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# LETTERS 34¢

## Nina Needs a Home—Please Help

Editor:

My wife Sharon and I came to Noe Valley in the summer of 1992. Two years ago our house was sold. We went through the difficult process of finding an affordable rental in the Noe Valley area, since we wanted to continue to have our children attend the Noe Valley Nursery School. This school has been a parent-run co-op for more than 30 years and has helped hundreds of families raise their children in a community atmosphere.

Due to help from parents at the school, we eventually found an apartment close to the school. Interestingly, our new landlord's children attended the nursery school in the early '70s. The teacher then, as now, was Nina Youkelson, and we instantly had a common thread that cinched the deal to rent the apartment.

And here comes the reason for our letter: In the second to last week of May, we were informed that Nina Youkelson, the longtime and much-loved director of the parent-run Noe Valley Nursery School, had been served an eviction notice following the sale of her house. (The house was converted into a TIC, with one party moving into the open apartment and the other doing an owner-move-in eviction.)

Nina and her roommate have been in their apartment for more than eight years and now have little more than a few days left to vacate. Nina has written the new landlord, asking for an additional 90 days to give her reasonable time to move but has yet to receive an answer.

On behalf of the current parents of the Noe Valley Nursery School and all parents who have sent their children to this wonderful place, we are asking for everyone's help to find a reasonably priced two- to three-bedroom rental in the Noe Valley vicinity. Noe Valley has great weather and nice houses with backyards, but it will not have vital community members like Nina if we do not step in and help when needed. We can prevent our cherished community members from being moved out of the community.

If you want to help or know of a vacant apartment that can accommodate two wonderful women, please write a note to Nina Youkelson, Noe Valley Nursery School, 1021 Sanchez Street, SF 94114, call me at 415-826-7647, or send an e-mail to zimmern@ix.netcom.com.

Johann Zimmern

Noe Valley resident and  
Noe Valley Nursery School parent

## A Little Less Fanfare on July 4

Editor:

Every year, the residents of 26th Street between Noe and Sanchez have a block party on July 4. It is wonderful to see the children running freely on the street, which is blocked off at both Noe and Sanchez to vehicular traffic. There are booths and music and it's tons of fun for everybody. However, we have a complaint that we would like to address to the organizers and the people who are responsible for the event.

The use of loudspeakers to amplify the music and the karaoke singing is very loud and goes on from noon until 8 p.m. (and sometimes later). The residents of the buildings and single homes above your event on Cesar Chavez Street are nearly blasted off their chairs for more than eight hours every July 4. We cannot keep our windows open or balcony doors open because of the volume of your speakers.

Perhaps this year you might try to do your event "unplugged," or use smaller ground-based speakers at reduced volume instead of the large elevated speakers. We think your event is wonderful and fun for

all who attend, but please be more considerate of your neighbors. Thank you.

Gene Ginsberg, for Concerned  
Neighbors of Cesar Chavez Street

## Mail Theft on Elizabeth Street

Editor:

I wanted to let the neighborhood know that I caught someone stealing mail from my mail slot today [May 20]. A man with short dark hair, sunglasses, a blue jacket with gray trim, and two messenger-like knapsacks took mail from my mail slot around 2 p.m.

I live on the 500 block of Elizabeth Street, and my next-door neighbor had told me there were problems with this in the past. So I usually wait for the sound of my postal carrier first taking my outgoing mail and then dropping my incoming mail through the slot in my door. Well, today I heard someone take my mail, but I didn't hear any mail drop through the slot. I looked outside and saw no sign of the mail carrier; in fact, I only saw a man walking quickly down the street. So I ran after the guy and confronted him.

He told me that he was sitting on my steps and had handed the mail to the postal carrier as he came by. I told him he was lying, and after arguing for a minute, he gave me back my mail. I was lucky he wasn't carrying a weapon, but I was very angry and wanted my mail back!

When I called the postal inspector, they told me they would send me a complaint form to complete. That didn't satisfy me, so I called the Mission Police Station. They said they could send out someone to take my statement, but that I should call the postal police. I called the mail fraud section of the U.S. Postal Service, but they told me they only handled mail fraud, not mail theft.

Not willing to give up, I ran outside to inform my postal carrier when I finally heard him drop mail through my slot. He said he had received other complaints in the neighborhood and that sometimes he finds mail opened, the contents rifled through, and thrown on the ground a block from where it likely was stolen. He gave me a number to call (USPS customer service: 1-800-275-8777), and I called and the person took down my information.

I just wanted everyone in Noe Valley to be on the lookout, and to know that they should never leave outgoing mail in their mailbox!

Deanna Grams  
Elizabeth Street



### 25 Years, But Who's Counting?

Noe Valley Voice co-publisher and managing editor Sally Smith took time out from reporting the news to make some of her own on May 6 when the Board of Supervisors passed a resolution commending her, co-publisher Jack Tipple, and the Voice staff for 25 years of service to San Francisco. Supervisor Mark Leno presented Smith with the official commendation, saying, "This Noe Valley institution would not be possible without the hard work and dedication [of Smith and Tipple], who give endless hours to their labor of love." Photo by Beverly Tharp

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## Joe Cassidy Inherits Dolores St. Condo Project

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

sad," says Susan Maher, a member of the school's board of directors and a certified public accountant who works a few blocks from the school. "The college has done some wonderful things, and I'm sad to see it go."

But fading plans to demolish the two-story Romanesque building that houses Reilly's funeral home and construct 13 condos on the site have been resuscitated. The condos' new life came after developer Joe Cassidy, who built the large retail-apartment complex next to Bell Market on 24th Street, purchased the Reilly mortuary building last month.

### Condo Project Alive and Kicking

Cassidy says his project will follow in the footsteps of plans offered in January 2001 by real estate developer Patrick Manus and Steven Welch. Welch, a member of the Duggan-Welch family, fifth-generation Mission District funeral directors and longtime Noe Valley residents, had purchased the property in 1997. (Welch said last spring that if the condo project was okayed, Reilly's funeral business would shift to Duggan's Funeral Service at 3434 17th Street.)

If Cassidy gets the go-ahead from City Planning, he will build four single-family townhouses facing Dolores Street, and nine condos facing 29th Street. Each of the two new residential buildings will be four stories high.

Cassidy says firm prices for the homes have not been established, but he guesses they will range from \$450,000 to \$750,000. Two of the units will be classified as affordable housing, in other words, sold at below market rate.

"The whole project hasn't changed very much [from last year]," Cassidy says.

Lack of adequate parking was one of the more contentious issues in the original Welch proposal, which called for one parking space per unit. That is the maximum allowed under the city's "transit first" policy, which encourages the use of public transportation.

To address neighbors' concerns, Cassidy says he would "love to double that if the [Planning] Commission allows us. It would free up space for the number of people parking on the street."

Cassidy adds that his firm would be willing to spend an extra \$1 million to pay for the extra parking, shoring, and underpinning of the complex.

The first step in the bureaucratic process comes June 12. That's when the Planning Department is set to hear the

neighbors' appeal of its preliminary ruling last year that the original Welch proposal did not pose a significant environmental impact.

"The hearing is being held on the exact same plans. Whether those plans will change, we don't know," says Vicki Rosen, president of Upper Noe Neighbors, which had fought to save the mortuary from the wrecking ball.

Then on June 13 at 1:30 p.m. (Room 400, City Hall), Cassidy's project will go before the Planning Commission.

### Mortician School Can't Afford to Stay

There is no question about the fate of the mortuary college, which opened its doors in the city on June 6, 1930, and has graduated more than 5,000 students since then. It was previously located on Post Street and moved to Dolores Street in the early 1990s, taking up the top floor of Reilly's funeral home.

Maher is particularly distraught because she and her family have had a long and close association with the Reilly family. Her father was a florist and provided funeral wreaths for Reilly's and many other funeral homes in San Francisco.

"The college has done a really wonderful job," she says. "We fought this [move] for a long time."

But the school found it more and more difficult to attract faculty in a city where housing costs are among the highest in the nation. Expensive rental prices hampered student enrollment; and many students were forced to double and triple up. "The economic reality is that no one can afford to live here," Maher says.

That reality led the school last year to announce its merger with the American River College in Sacramento. The San Francisco College curriculum will be incorporated into the American River College's course offerings this fall.

"We've had a lot of illustrious graduates over the years," Maher says about the long history of the Dolores Street school. "A lot of students have gone on to work as coroners and deputy coroners."

The school also combined classroom instruction with hands-on experience, handling 350 funeral services each year at its College Chapel Mortuary. Low-income families frequently were the benefactors of the students' services.

By the end of June, however, it will be all over for the San Francisco campus atop the funeral home.

"It's had a wonderful tradition." □



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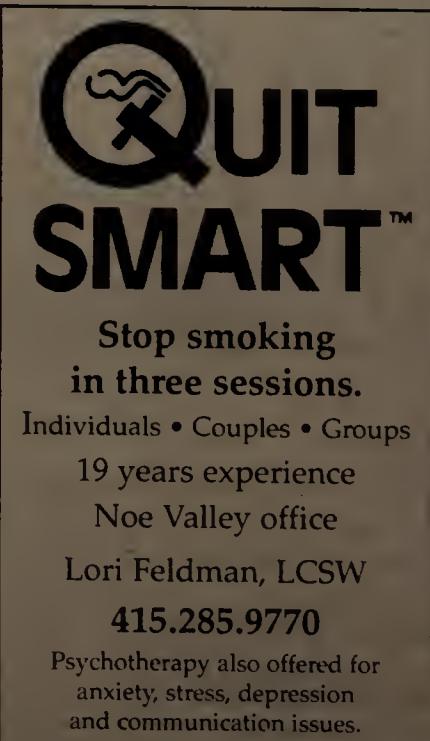
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## LETTERS

### How 'Democratic' Is Israel?

Editor:

Donna Even-Kesef wrote in her May letter to the editor that Israel is a democracy. This is absolutely false. Would she defend South Africa during its apartheid reign, calling it a democracy?

Israel allows only a handful of Palestinians to vote, in order to defend itself against apartheid accusations. Less than 5 percent of Palestinians can legally vote. How in the world is that a democracy?

For the past 30 years, as a population, Palestinians have been subjected to search and seizure without warrants; prison sentences without trials; long interrogations; sudden loss of water, electricity, and food supply; homes bulldozed after five-minute eviction notices, and the list goes on. These actions have not been relegated to "militants" or "terrorists." They have been dealt out to each and every Palestinian man, woman, and child, regardless of their situation. All of this happens simply because they are Palestinians and the Israeli government (not its people) considers them less than third-class citizens.

Laith Salma  
Via e-mail

lows the Israelis to justify the continued expropriation of land and collective punishment of the Palestinian people. And as we all know, it serves as a rationalization for reprisals by both sides.

To those Israelis who expressed a desire for understanding, please try walking a mile in a Palestinian's shoes. Then see if you can still justify Israeli military and settlement policies.

Najib Joe Hakim  
Valley Street

### They Were the Cutest Couple

Editor:

Hi, my name is Johnnie Sue Huddleston, and I lived at 30th and Noe 22 years ago. I love your paper, and remember that area fondly.

I saw in one of your issues that Terry Dowling had died in February. I worked with him and Corinne at the Boarding House [nightclub] in the 1970s. Did he die this year or last? That makes me so sad. He and Corinne were the cutest couple I've ever known.

Thanks again for a great paper. I'm saving it in my file of favorites!

Johnnie Sue Huddleston  
Via e-mail

Thank you, Johnnie Sue, for your nice note. Neighborhood bartender and musician Terry Dowling was 56 when he died of a heart attack in February 2001.—Ed.



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## LETTERS to the EDITOR

THE VOICE welcomes your letters to the editor. Write the *Noe Valley Voice*, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. Or send e-mail to [jack@noealleyvoice.com](mailto:jack@noealleyvoice.com).

Please include your name, address, and phone number. (Anonymous letters will not be considered for publication.) You may also send us mail via our web site: [www.noealleyvoice.com](http://www.noealleyvoice.com). Letters may be edited for brevity or clarity.

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**THE NOE VALLEY VOICE**  
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The *Noe Valley Voice* welcomes your letters, photos, and manuscripts, particularly on topics relating to Noe Valley. All items should include your name, address, and phone number, and may be edited for brevity or clarity. (Unsigned manuscripts will not be considered for publication.) Unsolicited contributions will be returned only if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

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# More Unfortunate Statements by the Man Behind Lemony Snicket

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

religious groups who tend to stop by your home.

So they asked, "What is your name?" and I just said, "Lemony Snicket," and then I decided to keep on using that. This was all before I was published or had written a children's book, let alone thought I would write children's books.... But when I was writing the first children's book, it seemed like it would be a good idea to publish it under the name of the narrator rather than the author. And then I had this pseudonym gathering dust from my previous "prankhood."

**Olivia:** I, of course, read *The Basic Eight* as soon as I heard about it.

**Daniel:** The Lowell alumni gossip chain seems to have sold a few copies.

**Olivia:** Was there any backlash from alumni or teachers?

**Daniel:** Well, it got reviewed in the *Lowell* [the school newspaper] and they hated it. There was this review of it, and then

From 'Book the First' by Lemony Snicket (Daniel Handler)

## A Series of Unfortunate Events

### \* THE BAD BEGINNING \*

#### Chapter One

If you are interested in stories with happy endings, you would be better off reading some other book. In this book, not only is there no happy ending, there is no happy beginning and very few happy things in the middle. This is because not very many happy things happened in the lives of the three Baudelaire youngsters, Violet, Klaus, and Sunny Baudelaire were intelligent children, and they were charming, and resourceful, and had pleasant facial features, but they were extremely unlucky, and most everything that happened to them was rife with misfortune, misery, and despair. I'm sorry to tell you this, but that is how the story goes.

Their misfortune began one day at Briny Beach. The three Baudelaire children lived with their parents in an enormous mansion at the heart of a dirty and busy city, and occasionally their parents gave them permission to take a rickety trolley—the word "rickety," you probably know, here means "unsteady" or "likely to collapse"—alone to the seashore, where they would spend the day as a sort of vacation, as long as they were home for dinner. This particular morning it was gray and cloudy, which didn't bother the Baudelaire youngsters one bit. When it was hot and sunny, Briny Beach was crowded with tourists and it was impossible to find a good place to lay one's blanket. On gray and cloudy days, the Baudelaires had the beach to themselves to do what they liked.

Violet Baudelaire, the eldest, liked to skip rocks. Like most 14-year-olds, she was right-handed, so the rocks skipped farther across the murky water when Violet used her right hand than when she used her left. As she skipped rocks, she was looking out at the horizon and thinking about an invention she wanted to build. Anyone who knew Violet well could tell she was thinking hard, because her long hair was tied up in a ribbon to keep it out of her eyes. Violet had a real knack for inventing and building strange devices, so her brain was often filled with images of pulleys, levers, and gears, and she never wanted to be distracted by something as trivial as her hair. This morning she was thinking about how to construct a device that could retrieve a rock after you had skipped it into the ocean.

Klaus Baudelaire, the middle child, and the only boy, liked to examine creatures in tidepools. Klaus was a little older than 12 and wore glasses, which made him look intelligent. He was intelligent. The Baudelaire parents had an enormous library in their mansion, a room filled with thousands of books on nearly every subject. Being only 12, Klaus of course had not read all of the books in the Baudelaire library, but he had read a great many of them and had retained a lot of the information from his readings. He knew how to tell an alligator from a crocodile. He knew who killed Julius Caesar. And he knew much about the tiny, slimy animals found at Briny Beach, which he was examining now.

Sunny Baudelaire, the youngest, liked to bite things. She was an infant, and very small for her age, scarcely larger than a boot. What she lacked in size, however, she made up for with the size and sharpness of her four teeth. Sunny was at an age where one mostly speaks in a series of unintelligible shrieks. Except when she used the few actual words in her vocabulary, like "bottle," "mommy," and "bite," most people had trouble understanding what it was that Sunny was saying. For instance, this morning she was saying "Gack!" over and over, which probably meant, "Look at that mysterious figure emerging from the fog!..."

...As the figure reached them, the children saw with relief that it was not anybody frightening at all, but somebody they knew: Mr. Poe. Mr. Poe was a friend of Mr. and Mrs. Baudelaire's whom the children had met many times at dinner parties....

...It's a nice day," Violet said finally, making conversation. Sunny made a noise that sounded like an angry bird, and Klaus picked her up and held her.

"Yes, it is a nice day," Mr. Poe said absently, staring out at the empty beach. "I'm afraid I have some very bad news for you children."

The three Baudelaire siblings looked at him. Violet, with some embarrassment, felt the stone in her left hand and was glad she had not thrown it at Mr. Poe.

"Your parents," Mr. Poe said, "have perished in a terrible fire."

Reprinted with author's permission from *The Bad Beginning*, the first book in Lemony Snicket's *Series of Unfortunate Events*, for children 9 to 12. Published 1999 by HarperCollins Juvenile Books.



**A Series of Unfortunate Events**

**THE AFFLICTED AUTHOR**

Lemony Snicket was born before you were, and is likely to die before you as well. His family has roots in a part of the country which is now underwater, and his childhood was spent in the relative splendor of the Snicket Villa which has since become a factory, a fortress and a pharmacy and is now, alas, someone else's villa. To the untrained eye, Mr. Snicket's hometown would not appear to be filled with secrets. Untrained eyes have been wrong before.

**Who is Lemony Snicket?**  
Finally here is the definitive—and only—book for anyone interested in learning more about the alarmingly elusive author.

Daniel Handler has just published Lemony Snicket's *Unauthorized Autobiography*, which promises to reveal the true origins of the mysterious narrator of *A Series of Unfortunate Events*.

there was an article about what the teachers thought of it, and then there was this sort of cheerful, naive interview with me. Actually, the *Lowell* just contacted me and said they wanted to do an interview again, and I thought, But last time you ambushed me!

**Olivia:** They wanted a Lemony Snicket-related interview. I take it?

**Daniel:** I guess so. We're going to do it in the fall when school is in session. For a while, there was a rumor that I was thrown out of the Lowell Alumni Association (*laughs*), but I still get their newsletters.

**Olivia:** How has your life changed with success?

**Daniel:** Well, we bought this house. That's been the big change. And unlisted our phone number. One thing that's been strange is that after *The Basic Eight* came out, I started hearing from everybody I ever went to high school with, and then as the Snicket books gained some visibility, I started hearing from everybody I ever did anything with. So that's been startling. It adds up to a lot of hours on the phone. So now they generally e-mail me.

**Olivia:** What are you working on now for grownups?

**Daniel:** I'm finishing a short-story collection and I'm working on a novel. The novel is coming slowly, but I think I'll finish the collection by the end of the year.

**Olivia:** There are going to be 13 books in total of the Lemony Snicket books. And whose idea was the *Unauthorized Autobiography*?

**Daniel:** Well, it was sort of mine. My editor and I started collecting all these photographs that we wanted to use, and it got really huge. We thought it would be fun to do something that wasn't another volume. It was sort of a joke, and was going

to be a pamphlet, like a promotional item in fact. But we had so much fun doing it, and it sort of blossomed and became a bona fide book. It was very fun to write. The actual stories about the Baudelaires will be 13 volumes, though.

**Olivia:** There's a movie about the Baudelaire orphans coming out from Nickelodeon. Is it a cartoon?

**Daniel:** Nickelodeon and Paramount Pictures. No, it'll be live action. They're hoping it'll be out by Christmas 2003.

**Olivia:** What's your involvement?

**Daniel:** I'm working on a new draft of the script now. Hollywood has a long tradition of not letting authors adapt their own material [for the screen], so probably someone else will work on it too. But I'm having a lot of fun with it now. I hope the movie will be good. Everyone seems enthusiastic and excited about it.

**Olivia:** Will it basically be the first book in the series?

**Daniel:** Mostly the first book, with a couple of things from the others. I'm not really a fanatic about it being a faithful adaptation. That isn't very interesting to me.

**Olivia:** What's your Noe Valley connection? I mean, besides the fact that I'm interviewing you today?

**Daniel:** I had a lot of friends from Lowell who lived in Noe Valley. It seems as if a lot of the coolest people at Lowell had gone to Everett [Middle School], so I spent a lot of time on 24th Street. We almost bought a house in Noe Valley. There are actually so few neighborhoods in the city where we wouldn't live, and it was hard to narrow it down, but we wound up falling in love with this house. I don't really hang out in the Haight, so I think of our house as being above the Castro [District]. I like a little grit in my neighborhood, but the unrelenting earnestness of Haight Street gets to me. I like the unrelenting sarcasm of the Castro. I like that Republican's real estate office on 24th Street [Twin Peaks Properties]. He's probably paying \$125 a month, you know, the lone holdout. One day he'll be gone, and that will be the end of that.

**Olivia:** People have strong feelings about that storefront. So where did you grow up?

**Daniel:** Balboa Terrace. It was a good place to grow up — lots of wide-open spaces, sort of square. And I just walked to Lowell. My parents still live there. I recently said to them, "You have to remodel my room, because it looks like I died when I was 17 and you're keeping it the same."

**Olivia:** Would you do another children's literature series?

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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# The Cost of Living in Noe

## Sharing Flats: A Way to Get Your Foot in the Door

By Corrie M. Anders

**A**s real estate prices continue to soar, some local renters have found that the only way they can afford to buy a home in San Francisco is by hooking up with a friend and sharing flats under a "tenants-in-common" agreement.

Though TICs are controversial (especially when other renters are displaced), they remain a viable option for some.

"Prices are high enough these days that people are considering tenancies-in-common as an alternative to high prices," says Randall Kostick, office manager at Zephyr Real Estate on 24th Street.

Most TIC partners look for small buildings with equal-sized units, so they can evenly split the cost of the property.

Flats apparently were the purchase of choice in April, as the month posted the sale of seven small properties, according to data provided by Zephyr. That was the highest number of sales of small properties — those with two to four units — in more than two years.

Small doesn't necessarily mean cheap. The most expensive among the seven properties was a two-unit building in the 4200 block of Cesar Chavez Street—with parking—which sold for \$1,350,000. The least expensive cost \$480,000.

"I suspect we'll see more of that kind of thing taking place in the future, because I don't see housing prices coming down," Kostick says.

For some time, the average price of a single-family home in Noe Valley has hovered around \$900,000. And sales ac-

tivity in April reflected a more robust housing market than in April 2001.

Noe Valley shoppers purchased a total of 22 single-family homes and condominiums during April—the same number bought a year earlier. But shoppers were far more willing to pay above asking prices to obtain a Noe Valley address.

Buyers of detached homes in April paid an average 12 percent above the initial price; they were satisfied to pay only 2 percent over asking price a year ago. And it only took about two weeks to close the deal on a detached house and about a month on a condo — both considerably quicker timeframes than one year earlier.

A three-bedroom, two-bath house in the 700 block of 27th Street was the most expensive single-family home sold during April. It cost \$1,380,000. The most expensive condo was a four-bedroom, two-bath unit in the 3300 block of 22nd Street, which sold for \$850,000.

For apartment owners and renters, the numerous "for rent" signs and concessions reflect the changing times in Noe Valley. Rent prices have declined dramatically from the dot-com heyday of 2000, as high-paying jobs and workers have disappeared.

To lure prospective tenants, some owners are advertising "move-in specials" that range from a half-month free rent to reduced costs to get into an apartment. Owners also have relaxed their pet policies.

Noe Valley Home Sales*						
Total Sales		Low Price (\$)	High Price (\$)	Average Price (\$)	Avg. Days on Market	Sale Price As % of List Price
<b>Single-family homes</b>						
April 02	12	\$559,000	\$1,380,000	\$863,425	15	112%
March 02	11	\$561,000	\$1,430,000	\$967,818	42	108%
April 01	15	\$561,000	\$1,700,000	\$894,533	20	102%
<b>Condominiums</b>						
April 02	10	\$435,000	\$850,000	\$651,100	33	104%
March 02	9	\$354,000	\$820,000	\$586,555	32	105%
April 01	7	\$300,000	\$699,000	\$440,000	74	98%
<b>2 to 4 unit buildings</b>						
April 02	7	\$480,000	\$1,350,000	\$921,428	42	102%
March 02	0	—	—	—	—	—
April 01	4	\$585,000	\$1,450,000	\$1,116,250	57	98%
<b>5+ unit buildings</b>						
April 02	0	—	—	—	—	—
March 02	0	—	—	—	—	—
April 01	0	—	—	—	—	—

\*Information provided to the Noe Valley Voice courtesy of Zephyr Real Estate ([www.zephyr-re.com](http://www.zephyr-re.com)) and based on all Noe Valley home sales (closings) recorded during month. "Noe Valley" in this survey was defined as the area bordered by Grand View, 22nd, Guerrero, and 30th streets.

Noe Valley Rents*			
Apartment Size	Average Rents (Jan. – March 2002)	Average Rents a Year Ago (Jan. – March 2001)	% Increase (+) or Decrease (-)
Studio	\$ 1,133 / mo.	\$ 1,313 / mo.	-13.7%
1 bedroom	1,649 / mo.	2,088 / mo.	-21.0%
2 bedrooms	2,303 / mo.	2,604 / mo.	-11.6%
3 or more bedrooms	2,997 / mo.	3,536 / mo.	-15.2%

\* Source: Rent Tech, Inc. ([www.renttech.com](http://www.renttech.com)).

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The five-year return on the Edward Jones' model portfolio outperformed 14 other major brokerage firms and the S&P 500 stock index included in the Wall Street Journal's most recent stock-picking survey.

### Motley Fool: A Different Kind of Broker, December 11, 2001

Motley Fool, online investor resource, describes Edward Jones as a brokerage that puts its clients first with a long-term investment philosophy.

### Forbes, November 2001

Edward Jones rose 16 places to rank 87 among the nation's 500 largest private companies. Edward Jones ranked 116 and 103 in 1999 and 2000, respectively.

### Working Mother Magazine, October 2001

Ranks Edward Jones among the nation's 100 best companies for working mothers.

### The Wall Street Journal, August 8, 2001

Features Edward Jones as a "not-com" securities firm that is enjoying success.

### US News and World Report, January 22, 2001

Profiles Edward Jones as a firm that builds relationships and measures success "one investor at a time."

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# POLICE B E A T

The following crime summaries were culled from incident reports filed at Mission Police Station in April 2002.

#### Street Robbery with Force: 8:10 p.m. on April 1; Dolores and Jersey streets

A woman was walking along Dolores Street near Jersey around 8 p.m. on Monday, April 1, when she was approached and grabbed by a man wearing a black baseball cap, a long black coat, and brown pants. The man, who was about 25 years old, 5'10", and 180 pounds, demanded, "Give me your stuff. Where's your money?"

Fearing for her safety, the woman gave the man her messenger bag, containing a Sony Discman CD player, several CDs, a leather day-planner, and checkbook. She also turned over her gym bag, which held her workout clothes, keys, wallet, and driver's license. The man then jumped into the passenger seat of a small white, older-model car, which had been waiting nearby.

The woman told police she was not injured, and police broadcast a suspect and vehicle description to no avail. The case has been assigned to the San Francisco Police Department's Robbery Division.

#### Robbery with Knife: 8:30 p.m. on April 2; 24th and Castro streets

At 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 2, a Diamond Street resident was walking along 24th Street near Castro headed toward his home when two men approached him from behind. One suspect placed a sharp object that felt like a knife in the middle of the walker's back and said, "Hey, give

me all your money." The other suspect stood in front of the resident.

The Diamond Street resident reached into his pants pocket for his wallet and handed it to the man in front of him, who removed \$18 in cash. The robber then asked, "Is that all you got?" The resident said it was, and the man handed the wallet back without taking anything else or harming him. The suspects then walked south on Castro Street.

Police responded to the scene and searched the area, but were unable to locate the suspects. Both were described as 18 to 20 years old and 5'8" tall. One suspect had a dark mustache and was wearing a dark, baggy sweatshirt. The case has been assigned to the San Francisco Police Department's Night Investigations Unit.

#### Store Burglary: 2:38 a.m. on April 6; 3900 block of 24th Street

At 2:38 a.m. on Saturday, April 6, police responded to a burglar alarm at a camera store in the 3900 block of 24th Street. The front door of the store had been smashed and several cameras and boxes were lying on the sidewalk in front of the store. Police found boxes of film scattered on the floor throughout the store and a brick behind the front door. Numerous cameras were missing from the shelves.

Officers searched the store for suspects, but found none. The Crime Scene Investigations Unit was called to the store for follow-up. The case has been assigned to the San Francisco Police Department's Burglary Division.

#### Residential Burglary: Between noon on April 14 and 11:30 p.m. on April 22; 4300 block of 26th Street

On Sunday, April 14, the resident of a home in the 4300 block of 26th Street near Douglass left town on a business trip and asked an acquaintance to housesit. The resident had locked all doors and

windows to the home, and gave the acquaintance keys to the home.

A week later, at 11:30 p.m. on Monday, April 22, the acquaintance arrived at the home to find the front door open. He also noticed that the kitchen light was on. He walked through the home to see if anyone was inside and noticed that the resident's boom box and digital camera were missing from the bedroom. He also discovered that the back door of the home was cracked and that the door lock and pieces of wood were on the ground.

Police determined that an unknown suspect had gained entry through the back door and then left the home through the front door. The case has been assigned to the San Francisco Police Department's Burglary Division.

#### Residential Burglary: Between 9:30 a.m. and 4:10 p.m. on April 19; 4300 block of Cesar Chavez Street

When the resident of a home in the 4300 block of Cesar Chavez Street near Douglass returned home from work in the late afternoon of Friday, April 19, he noticed a door to the breezeway ajar. He then discovered that his guitar and amplifier were missing and that a window facing his backyard was popped out and resting on top of his couch. He also noticed that a closet door which had been closed in the morning was now open. The resident then notified his wife, and she discovered that a ring and antique watch had been stolen from a filing cabinet.

Police determined that an unknown suspect had removed the back window to enter and exit the home. They also requested that Crime Scene Investigations respond to the home for follow-up. The case has been assigned to the San Francisco Police Department's Burglary Division.

#### Residential Burglary: Between 8:15 a.m. on April 22 and 1:50 a.m. on April 23; 4300 block of 26th Street

At 8:15 a.m. on Monday, April 22, a female houseguest of the owner of a residence in the 4300 block of 26th Street near Diamond locked and secured the windows and doors before leaving for work. When she and the resident returned to the home much later that night, the resident noticed several items missing from the house, including \$120 in cash, a backpack, a leather jacket, a Nintendo video game system, a Nikon digital camera, a mini-disc player, and a pair of sunglasses. All the windows and doors were still locked, except for the garage door, and the houseguest realized that she had closed the garage door but forgotten to lock it.

Police, finding no signs of forced en-

#### How to Contact the SFPD

Noe Valley straddles two San Francisco police districts—Mission and Ingleside—each with its own turf. Mission police cover the northern half of Noe Valley, from 21st Street to Cesar Chavez Street. Ingleside police have jurisdiction over the southern half of Noe Valley, from Cesar Chavez Street to Glen Park.

Those residents and merchants who live and work within the Mission Police District can report recurring crime or safety problems by phoning Mission Station at 558-5400. They may also send e-mail to Captain Greg Corrales at [gregory\\_corrales@ci.sf.ca.us](mailto:gregory_corrales@ci.sf.ca.us), or attend police-community meetings held the last Tuesday of the month. The next meeting will be Tuesday, June 25, at 6 p.m., at Mission Station, 630 Valencia Street. (To report anonymously on drugs, gangs, or other crimes, call the nontraceable hotline at 558-5452.)

Residents and merchants in "outer" Noe Valley—south of Cesar Chavez—can contact Ingleside Station by calling 404-4000 or e-mailing Captain Kevin Dillon at [kevin\\_dillon@ci.sf.ca.us](mailto:kevin_dillon@ci.sf.ca.us). The Ingleside police-community meetings take place the third Tuesday of the month at Ingleside Station, 1 Sergeant John Young Lane, near the 2000 block of San Jose Avenue. The next meeting will be Tuesday, June 18, at 7 p.m.

To report a crime in progress, call 911. (Cell phone users, dial 553-8090.)

try, determined that an unknown suspect had gained entry to the home through the garage door. Due to lack of physical evidence, Crime Scene Investigations was not called to the home. The case has been assigned to the San Francisco Police Department's Burglary Division.

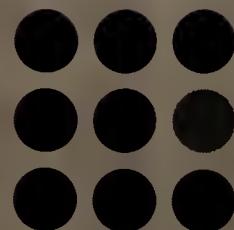
#### Mental Health Detention: 4:15 p.m. on April 30; 4000 block of 24th Street

In the late afternoon of Tuesday, April 30, a 46-year-old homeless man was seen yelling, screaming, and running in and out of traffic in the 4000 block of 24th Street. Police attempted to speak with the man, but he was incoherent. Police, believing the man was a danger to himself, transported him to San Francisco General Hospital for evaluation and treatment. □

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# This 'n' That

By Laura McHale Holland

**J**une. The month when days are long; children say farewell to teachers who have guided them through another academic year; families, lovers, and friends plan getaways long and short; gardens in full bloom are kissed by the fog.

One garden to note is on the third-floor patio of **On Lok's 30th Street Senior Center**. The spot where seniors often can be seen doing tai chi is now graced with a vibrant mural, unveiled in May. Designed and painted by participants in On Lok's senior services and health programs, the mural commemorates the seniors' diverse backgrounds as well as the impact the center has had on their lives.

"This mural shows the 'Tree of Life' colored with the many flags of the countries from which the seniors emigrated," notes participant **Frances Burns**. "A desire to feel part of this country is shown by the figures with uplifted arms. The weavers—one weaving on a loom, the other doing needlework on plastic canvas—are symbolic of the weaving of different cultures and lives into the fabric of the country, the community, and the center."

Initiated by On Lok Senior Services, the project was funded by the San Francisco Arts Commission and guided to fruition by the Precita Eyes muralists group. To see the mural, just stop by the center at 225 30th Street between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

\* \* \*

When you've finished admiring the painting, you can stroll down Dolores Street to 29th Street to view a different sort of multicultural phenomenon, **Hair Play**. In this hair salon, you'll find African, Asian, and European American stylists tending the locks of an equally multiracial clientele. One customer, Peggy Orenstein, is so enthusiastic about the salon's commitment to integration that she wrote a glowing piece about Hair Play for *Self* magazine's May issue.

This month, Hair Play stylists are teaming up with the organization Community Impact (CI) to do complementary consultations, haircuts, and styling for clients of CI's Homeless Prenatal Program. The program offers support for homeless women in San Francisco who are parents or expectant parents.

"We're really excited," says stylist



Paco Alvarado was among the many artists who helped paint a mural unveiled at On Lok's 30th Street Senior Center in May. The seniors invite Noe Valley residents to drop by for a look at their creation—it's in a sunny garden patio on the third floor.

Photos by Beverly Thorp

**Erin Cervelli**, "I'm looking forward to giving back, to doing something to help someone else."

Salon coordinator **Irén Matsuoka** is also enthusiastic about offering CI's clients a "day of beauty and empowerment" on June 2. "We all know that self-confidence is an integral part of success, and we'd like to help these clients achieve self-esteem and confidence they can pass on to the children of the future."

\* \* \*

Two people who have crisscrossed this continent and the Atlantic Ocean to create a new home and family are **Cindy Goldfield** and her husband **Stephen Leigh Askew**. (He goes by Leigh.) They met in 1996 on a train from Swansea to Fishguard in Wales.

"I was on a holiday with my mother, trying to heal the remainders of a broken heart," says Goldfield. "We sat near Leigh and several of his friends on the train. They were on a stag night trip to Ireland and just torturing the poor groom-to-be, complete with a blow-up doll. We thought they were funny, and they adopted my mom and me for the evening. To make a long story short, Leigh ended up traveling with us for the rest of the week and then coming out to California the next month."



Three-year-old Jack Indiana Goldfield-Askew—Indiana Jones?—is a gregarious boy who prefers balsamic vinegar, cloth napkins, and musical theater. He also appears rugged enough to join parents Cindy Goldfield and Leigh Askew on their world adventures.

Askew was in England's Merchant Navy at the time. This meant he was at sea for four months at a stretch. Then he'd spend six weeks with Goldfield in California until his next tour of duty. Two years after they met, the couple retraced their first trip together (without Goldfield's mom this time) and got pregnant on the Irish Sea. Their son, **Jack Indiana Goldfield-Askew**, was born on Jan. 25, 1999. (They've been on our "More Mouths to Feed" list for quite a while.)

Askew has absolutely no regrets about giving up both his dream job and his country to share the day-to-day joys of parenting son Jack with his wife. He is now a project manager for MCI-WorldCom. Goldfield's adjustment to parenthood was entirely different, but equally regret-free.

"I have incorporated Jack into my daily life. It was a challenge to keep working right through the transition to mothering.

Jack has been a part of my work since he was just days old. I am a voice-over actor, and he has learned that a booth is a place to be quiet. He goes daily on auditions and jobs both. He also attends lots of theater rehearsals. I used to just wear him in a sling. Now he usually brings a load of trains and plays in the corner," says Goldfield.

Goldfield, who formerly resided at 21st and Church streets, loves the unexpected hugs and little discoveries that Jack brings to their Glen Park home. Jack, says Mom, is a gregarious and funny child who could do the Time Warp (from the *Rocky Horror Picture Show*) at age 2. "He kisses cats, memorizes musicals, likes his bread with balsamic vinegar and olive oil, prefers a cloth napkin but would never wear a bib, talks with his hands, and 'reads' aloud from imaginary books," she adds.

One thing that disturbs Goldfield about raising a young child is the gender-specificity of kids' clothes. "With the exception of some great places in Noe Valley—Li'l Lizards, Wavy Footprints, Peek-a-Bootique, Just for Fun, and the Ark—most kids' departments and catalogs feature tones of pink, yellow, purple, and red for girls, and only cargo, camouflage, and dark colors for boys. Why is it that cats are for girls and dogs are for boys? Why are stars for girls and planets for boys? So I have just shopped both departments and sewn my own stuff."

As for Jack's future, Mom and Dad both hope their son finds happiness in his work, whatever that may be. "I think the best thing is to be able to make a living for yourself doing what you love," Goldfield says.

\* \* \*

Three men who make a living doing what they love are musicians **Michael Manring**, **Larry Kassin**, and **Tom Darter**. They're having a release concert and celebration for their trio **Manring/Kassin/**

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19



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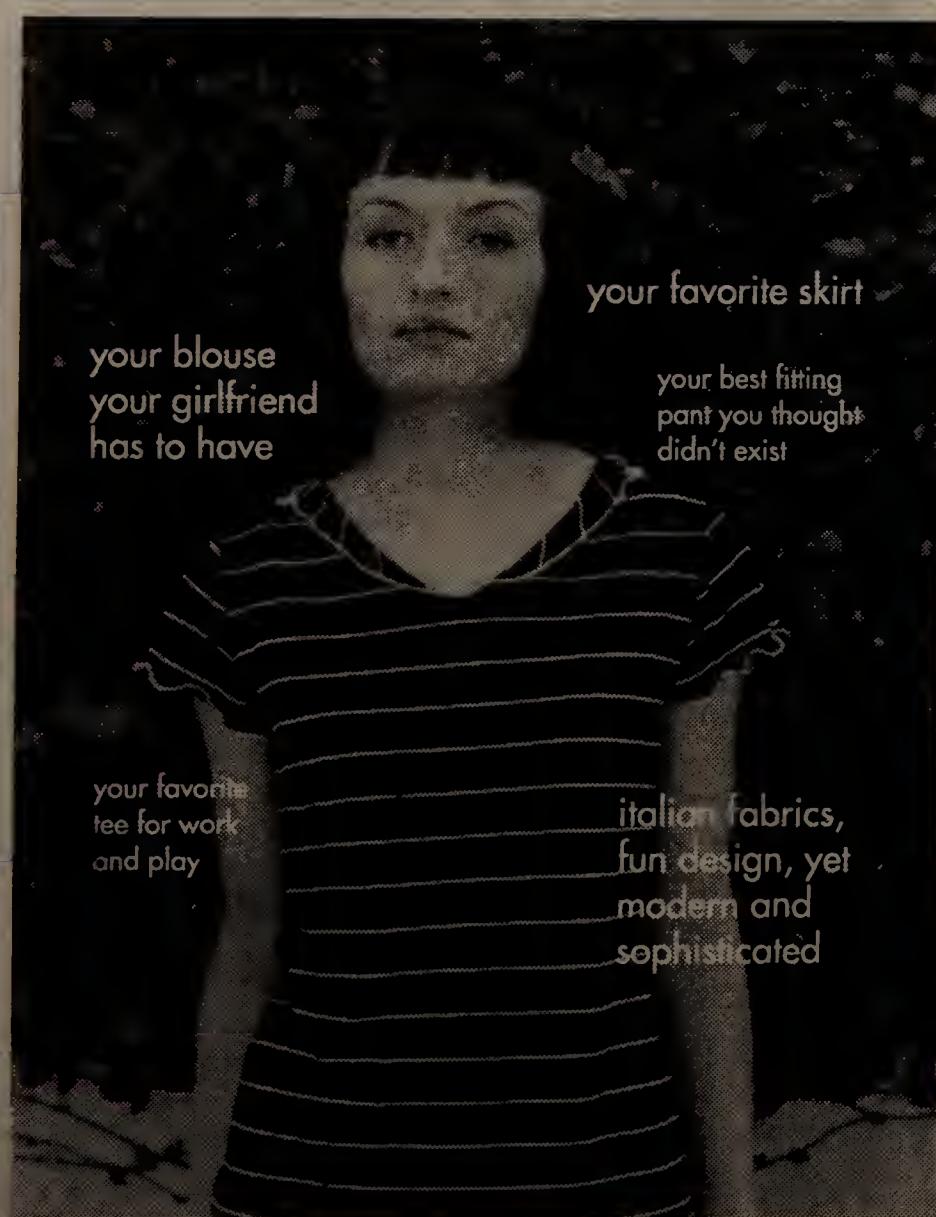
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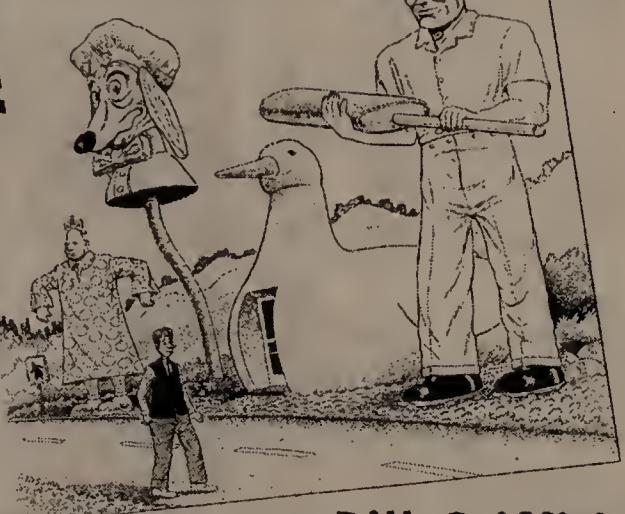
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# This 'n' That

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

Darter's first CD on Saturday, June 8, at the Noe Valley Ministry. The CD is titled *Scatter* and features Manring on bass, Kassin on flute, and Darter on piano.

The evening is part of the Noe Valley Music Series, founded by Kassin 16 years ago. Each member of the trio is a critically acclaimed musician and composer in his own right. Together they play provocative, complex compositions that tear down the categories between jazz, avant-classical, world, and rock music.

Kassin points out that there is a healthy dose of silliness thrown into the mix as well. "One of the pieces is called 'Eubie Blake on Mars,'" he says. "It's been described as a fusion of ragtime, stride piano, and science fiction. There's another one called 'Gamma People.' It's our score to an imaginary low-budget science-fiction film."

\*\*\*

Some of us think a profitable dot-com only exists in science fiction. But Valley Street resident and freelance photographer **Najib Joe Hakim** has snapped a picture of Brett Wilson, CEO of Youcansave.com, a profitable dot-com discounter.

"You can get toothbrushes for discounted rates, or cat litter," says Hakim in describing Youcansave's niche. "It reminds me of those 'As Seen on TV!' products."

The company won the Hot Tech Award



Tom Darter, Larry Kassin, and Michael Manring (left to right) are celebrating the release of their CD *Scatter* at a Noe Valley Music Series concert June 8.

and was profiled in the *San Francisco Business Times* last October. Hakim's photo of Wilson subsequently won the Peninsula Press Club's "Best Photo, Non-Dailies Category" for 2001. The award was presented this May.

Hakim is surprised that his photo won. "It was a little quirky, and the paper tends to go with more conventional things. It's more of a magazine photo. I'm delighted that the newspaper ran it because a photo has to be published to be eligible for the award," he says.

\*\*\*

Congratulations are also in order for a group of students at **James Lick Middle School**. The kids made colorful costumes for their dancing debut in this year's Carnaval parade on Memorial Day weekend.

\*\*\*

Also in May, students from the school were given a 2002 Precita Eyes Mural Award for a project they completed, with the aid of muralist Elaine Chu, at their school in the summer of 2001.

\*\*\*

Another recent honoree is **Roger Craib**, native San Franciscan and president of Friends of Glen Canyon Park. He was given an official commendation by the Board of Supervisors at their meeting April 22, for his lifelong devotion to restoring and improving our city's parks. Most Wednesday mornings Craib can be seen in Glen Canyon Park working on trail improvements, non-native plant removal, or the redirection of eroding flows of rainwater. He says he is looking forward to helping the Rec and Park Department work with disadvantaged and at-risk youth this summer on a trails and creek restoration project in the Canyon.

\*\*\*

Rounding out this month's medley of luminaries is neighborhood poet **Zack Rogow**. He is a 2002 inductee into Pudding House Publication's prestigious Poets' Greatest Hits National Archiving Project. As part of this, a chapbook containing 12 signature poems is now available through Pudding House, the largest small press in America. "I appreciate being asked for my work for a change," says Rogow, who teaches in the creative writ-

ing graduate program at California College of Arts and Crafts. "I spend a lot of energy sending my work out, and the odds aren't very good right now because so many people are writing poetry."

Here's one of Rogow's recent oeuvres, set at a gas station on the outskirts of Noe Valley. It's too new to be in his chapbook, and we're pleased to print it here:

## Vision in the Mission

By Zack Rogow

I was pumping 20 bucks worth of Regular this evening

at the Gas and Shop on 30th Street  
wondering if this ever really will pass  
my spirits pointing toward Empty  
when I saw above the cinderblocks  
where you buy Sprites, Milky Ways and

motor oil  
a flock of plum clouds  
blazing underneath lava-gold  
against a blue silk sky  
a sunset so fin-de-siècle  
so beyond

imagining  
that it seemed to make the station's night neon  
switch on just at that moment  
and my eyes let go

of the little numbers dashing toward FULL  
to gawk at the firmament  
even though today

I was doubting out loud to myself  
and all my problems were adding up wrong  
there are still these Ballet Russe costumes  
of the evening sky  
above fluorescent letters bleeding light

\*\*\*

Why not gawk at the heavens yourself  
this month and write your own take on the  
evening sky?

Enjoy your neighbors, take a soak at  
Elisa's Spa, stroll on over to Tully's, buy  
some oil at Beyond the Sea, listen to  
doves cooing in the bushes, and then send  
us your news. We want to know about  
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E-mail leads to [thisnthat@noealleyvoice.com](mailto>thisnthat@noealleyvoice.com); mail them to us at 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114; or leave a phone message at 821-3324. We eagerly await your news. □

## NAJIB JOE HAKIM

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Brett Wilson, CEO of the profitable online business Youcansave.com, was the subject of Najib Joe Hakim's prize-winning photo.

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## SHORT TAKES

### Walk to the YMCA

The Mission YMCA and the Noe Valley Ministry have teamed up to offer YMCA day camps this summer. For the first time, the Y's sports and specialty camps will be within walking distance for neighborhood children and teens.

Weekly camp sessions will be held at the Ministry, 1021 Sanchez Street at 23rd Street, from June 10 through Aug. 16. The hours are Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Offerings include animal safari and "shake-and-bake" camps for youngsters entering kindergarten through second grade. Third- through fifth-graders can enjoy soccer and outdoor adventure camps. Teen "roadtrip camp" includes cooperative games, team building, and other activities for the middle-school set.

"All camps include arts and crafts and field trips daily. Some camps include overnights too," says camp leader Shauna Eastberg. "We have lots of room, the prices are definitely affordable, and financial assistance is available."

There is also a counselor-in-training program for high school students. "The trainees learn leadership skills, and it's awesome how the younger kids look up to them," says Eastberg.

To get the whole scoop, call Eastberg at 716-1886. Sign up at the Mission YMCA, 4080 Mission Street at Bosworth.

### The Babies Are Coming

Natural Resources, the childbirth and parenting center on Castro Street, will hold several classes this summer, for expectant parents and parents of young children.

A childbirth preparation class taught by Summer Andreason will start on Tuesday, June 18, 7 to 9:30 p.m. It will meet weekly (except July 2) until July 30. The class series is designed to thoroughly prepare parents for childbirth as well as for the early months of caring for a newborn, including breastfeeding. For those whose schedules do not permit weekly classes, instructor Media Aranda will cover the same bases in a one-day intensive on Sunday, June 9, 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Aranda will also conduct a three-hour class in child and infant CPR on Monday, June 3, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Participants will learn cardiopulmonary resuscitation techniques and how to respond if a baby starts

choking. Meanwhile, the drop-in Mothers and Babies Support Group, led by Lucia Maya, will continue on Wednesdays from 10:30 a.m. to noon.

Some of the other groups and classes offered to parents are prenatal and postpartum fitness workshops, pediatric first aid, and infant massage. Also available are movement and singing classes for youngsters from 18 months to 3 years old.

For more information, call 550-2611 or stop in at Natural Resources, 1307 Castro Street at 24th Street. You can also visit [www.naturalresourcesonline.com](http://www.naturalresourcesonline.com).

### Take Note, Avoid a Stroke

To improve our community's odds of staying healthy, an educational group called Life Line Screening is coming to the Noe Valley Ministry on Monday, June 24, at 7 p.m.

Life Line representatives will share information on preventive health care and discuss how to identify your risk for stroke, vascular disease, and osteoporosis.

The evening will also introduce four screening procedures to be offered by Life Line at the Ministry on Sept. 7. These include screening the carotid arteries in the neck for stroke vulnerability, the aortic vessel in the abdomen for aneurysms, the arteries in the legs for peripheral arterial disease, and a bone density test for osteoporosis. The osteoporosis test is \$35; the other three are \$40 each.

The Noe Valley Ministry is at 1021 Sanchez Street at 23rd Street. Preregistration for the tests in September is required. To make an appointment for screening, or for more information about June's open informational meeting, call 1-800-407-4557.

### Birds! Bugs! Bats!

The group Friends of Glen Canyon Park is putting on Nature Fest 2002, its third annual park extravaganza, Sunday, June 9, from 1 to 7 p.m. There will be slide shows and nature walks guided by experts on birds, bugs, butterflies, and geology. Also included will be children's activities and a barbecue picnic.

"A lady from the Bat Conservancy will show slides, as well as live bats. She's so popular we usually have her do her thing twice during the day," says Jane Conner, of Friends of Glen Canyon Park.

A fundraiser to help with restoration of the canyon, the event costs \$20 for adults and \$5 for children under 12. To register, call Richard Craib at 648-0862. The center of activity will be near the Silvertree Camp building within Glen Canyon Park, located at Bosworth and Chenery streets.



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## SHORT TAKES

### Who Says 'I Do'?

For many heterosexuals, church bells and wedding bells are one and the same. But for gay couples, sanction by the mainstream church is often out of the question. Now Bethany United Methodist Church is paving the way for "holy unions" of gays and lesbians to be part of the official mix.

On June 7 and 8, Bethany will host "We Do Too in 2002," the first national conference on the United Methodist Church and its attitudes toward gay and lesbian domestic partnerships.

"The United Methodist Church does not allow pastors to perform holy unions, nor for holy unions to be performed in our churches. However, it does support the legal rights of gay and lesbian couples," notes Karen Oliveto, Bethany's pastor. "The conference is our way of pushing the UMC to greater faithfulness towards its gay and lesbian members."

Kate Kendell, executive director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights, will kick off the conference as keynote speaker on Friday night at 7:30. She will be followed by singer-songwriter Judy Fjell. Saturday's conference will begin with registration at 8 a.m. and close with a worship service at 4:30 p.m. Workshop topics include domestic partnerships leg-

isolation, rituals and rites, the Bible, and the United Methodist Church and social change.

The entire event, including breakfast and lunch on Saturday, costs \$80. If you attend Friday only, the cost is a sliding-scale \$15 to \$50.

Sign up via e-mail at [BethanyUMC@aol.com](mailto:BethanyUMC@aol.com), by snail mail, or by stopping by the church office at 1268 Sanchez Street at Clipper Street. For further details call 647-8393.

### A Day for the Parks

"Parks and other pedestrian places are essential to a city's happiness," says Enrique Peñalosa, internationally acclaimed speaker and former mayor of Bogotá, Colombia. He'll be addressing the crowd—along with Mayor Willie Brown and Elizabeth Goldstein, general manager of San Francisco's Recreation and Park Department—at the Neighborhood Parks Council's fourth annual Parks Caucus June 8.

This free event is open to everyone interested in improving our city's neighborhood parks. It will feature skill-building workshops on such topics as park publicity, neighborhood advocacy, and fundraising. Breakfast and lunch will be provided for those who preregister.

The caucus will be from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Delancey Street Town Hall, 600 Embarcadero (at Brannan). For further information and to R.S.V.P., call Alexis Kershner at 621-3260, or e-mail [akershner@sfneighborhoodparks.org](mailto:akershner@sfneighborhoodparks.org).

### Free Counseling for Seniors

Do you or someone you care for need support while going through a rough time? Family Service Agency of San Francisco has help for seniors who may be facing isolation, loss, depression, illness, or other challenges in their day-to-day life. The agency's Senior Peer Counseling program trains volunteers over the age of 55 to assist fellow seniors through emotional support, problem-solving, and compassionate listening. All services are voluntary and free of charge.

For information or referral, call Family Service Agency at 474-7310 and ask for Nancy Alpert, LCSW.

*This month's Short Takes were written by Laura McHale Holland.*

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# JUNE 2002

**NOW:** COMMUNITY BOARDS is accepting applications for volunteers for community mediation training, to be offered in the fall. Call Donna Salazar for info, at 920-3820, ext. 102.

**JUNE 1:** BEACH BLANKET BABYLON is holding auditions for male and female singers; bring music, resume, and a photo (dance shoes optional). Noon. Club Fugazi, 678 Beach St. 421-0518.

**JUNE 1:** The INA CHALIS OPERA Ensemble performs Verdi's *La Traviata*. 7:30 pm. Community Music Center, 544 Capp St. 647-6015.

**JUNE 1:** Stephen Kent and Yassir Chady play solos and duos on the DIDGERIDOO and oud. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

**JUNE 1-16:** "The ART OF TRAVEL" features Leigh Weber and Richard Price's photographs and paintings from their travels around the globe. Reception with live music May 11, 7-10 pm. Noe Art Space at Value Vacation, 3901 23rd St. 824-2553.

**JUNE 1-30:** Noe Valley artist JS, aka Joseph Suarez, exhibits MIXED-MEDIA work in "Dinosaurs and Plastics: What the Crescent Moon Said." Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

**JUNE 2:** Community Music Center's Pursuit of Excellence RECITAL features graduating seniors performing works by J.S. Bach, Vivaldi, Brahms, and Debussy. 2:30 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 647-6015.

**JUNE 3:** The Noe Valley Ministry's Odd Mondays series features an evening of VEDIC CHANT with the son of Sri Tirumalai Krishnamacharya, T.K.V.

Desikachar and family. 8 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 282-8186.

**JUNE 3-28:** Chris Sequeira leads classes in LIVING T'AI CHI. Mon. and Tues., 6-7:30 pm at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St., and Wed. and Fri., 10:15 am-noon at Douglass Park. 773-8185 or 650-756-6857.

**JUNE 3 & 4:** Rova Saxophone Quartet will be among the musicians performing and discussing "The Art of the IMPROVISER." 8 pm. Intersection for the Arts, 446 Valencia St. 626-2787.

**JUNE 4:** A BARDIC ROUNDTABLE features painter Richard Perri discussing poetry and politics. 7:30 pm. Bird and Beckett Books and Records, 2788 Diamond St. 586-3733.

**JUNE 4, 18 & 25:** Preschool STORY TIME, a read-aloud program for children ages 3 to 5, begins at 10 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

**JUNE 4-26:** Empty Hands MARTIAL ARTS Studio offers classes for children ages 6 to 14. Tues., 4:30-5:30 pm, and Wed., 5-6 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 824-6063.

**JUNE 6:** Noe Valley writer BARBARA LEWIS will be among the readers at the Mechanics Institute's Prose in Progress series. 6-8 pm. 57 Post St. 393-0100.

**JUNE 6 & 13:** The Retired and SENIOR VOLUNTEER program will be working at the San Francisco Food Bank; no heavy lifting. 10 am-noon. 900 Pennsylvania Ave. 731-3335.

**JUNE 6-JULY 27:** Images by the recipients of the 12th annual International Fund for DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY Awards will be on display at the FiftyCrows Gallery. Reception

June 6, 6:30-10 pm; gallery hours, Wed. through Sat., noon-6 pm. 1074 Folsom St. 551-0091.

**JUNE 7:** TECHNOMANIA CIRCUS performs a "black-light vaudeville circus faire," with sword swallowing. 10 pm. Club Galia, 2565 Mission St. 970-9777.



Didgeridooist Stephen Kent will be joined by oud player Yassir Chady in a June 1 concert at the Noe Valley Music Series.

*Photo by Anne Hamersky*

**JUNE 7 & 8:** "We Do Too in 2002!" is a conference focused on the legal recognition of gay/lesbian domestic partnerships and the ministries that give their support. Bethany United Methodist Church, 1268 Sanchez St. Call 647-8393 for workshop information.

**JUNE 7-JULY 10:** Voice photographer PAMELA GERARD exhibits her images of France at The French Class gallery. Reception June 7, 5 to 8 pm. 500 Sutter St. 362-3666.

**JUNE 8:** Laurie Mackenzie's WALKING TOUR of food in the Mission locates ingredients, tours galleries and cultural centers, and ends with lunch. 10:30 am-3 pm. Meet at Encantada Gallery, 908 Valencia St. Register at 642-3393.

**JUNE 8:** Cynthia Chin-Lee's ANIMAL STORY HOUR spotlights her alphabet book, *A Is for Asia*. 11:30 am. Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way. 554-9600.

**JUNE 8:** Judy Irving shows a rough cut of her feature film documentary *The Wild Parrots of San Francisco: The Movie*. 2-4:30 pm. Main Library, Koret Auditorium, 100 Larkin St. 557-4596.

**JUNE 8:** CHRIS MOLLA and band will perform "Fingerpaint Music" for kids and grownups at 3:30 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 282-2317.

**JUNE 8:** The Manring/Kassin/Darter trio performs a CONCERT to celebrate the release of the CD *Scatter*. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

**JUNE 8-AUG. 10:** "Reading Road Trip U.S.A." is the theme of the SUMMER READING CLUB sponsored by the SF Public Library. Visit one of the branches for information, or call the Main Library for information, 557-4400.

**JUNE 9:** The CASTRO BUBBLE BATH to scrub the neighborhood's streets offers tree coffee at the start, a tree brunch at the finish, and good clean fun in between. 8-10 am. Meet at 18th and Hartford.

**JUNE 9:** NATURE FEST 2002 in Glen Canyon Park features walks with experts on birds, bats, bugs, butterflies, geology, native plants, and park history, besides kid's activities and a barbecue picnic. For information, call 584-8576.

**JUNE 9:** A one-day SILENT RETREAT includes Hatha Yoga, meditation, and a vegetarian lunch. 9 am-5 pm. Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St. Please register by June 4, at 821-1117.

**JUNE 9:** GLEN VELEZ and his West Coast Framedrum Ensemble perform original compositions in the Handance method of drumming. 6 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 824-6063.

**JUNE 11:** FLUTE PLAYER Maurice Garcia plays at the Glen Park Library. 10:30 am. 653 Chenery St. 337-4740.

**JUNE 11:** Bird and Beckett Books and Records hosts a Literary Giants June BIRTHDAY READING. 7:30 pm. 2788 Diamond St. 586-3733.

**JUNE 11 & 16:** The Golden Gate MEN'S CHORUS performs "In Memoriam: Prayers for Peace," featuring Luigi Cherubini's *Requiem Mass No. 2 in D Minor*. June 11, 8 pm; June 16, 7 pm. Mission Dolores Basilica, 370 Dolores St. 668-4462.

**JUNE 12:** The Pacific Academy of HOMEOPATHY offers a free introductory seminar from 7 to 9 pm. 1199 Sanchez St. Call 695-2710 to reserve a spot.

**JUNE 13-30:** The 26th annual Lesbian and Gay FILM FESTIVAL includes Noe Valley filmmaker Cathy Lee Crane's *The Girl from Marseilles*, a fictional memoir inspired by Andre Breton's surrealist novel *Nadja*. Castro Theater, 429 Castro St. 703-8650.

**JUNE 14:** The Noe Valley Nursery School QUILT RAFFLE offers a chance to win the Peace Quilt on display at Cover to Cover. Call 647-2278 for info.

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# CALENDAR

**JUNE 18:** The S.F. Lesbian/Gay FREE DOM BAND celebrates its 25th anniversary with a free concert, "We're an American Band," featuring music by Aaron Copland, Samuel Barber, and others. 8:15 pm. Bethany Methodist Church, 1268 Sanchez St. 647-8393.

**JUNE 19:** Tye the MAGIC GUY performs for all ages. 3 pm. Mission Library, 300 Bartlett St. 695-5090.

**JUNE 20:** FILMS for preschoolers ages 3 to 5 include *Red Riding Hood*, *Rhinos and Hippos*, and *Where the Wild Things Are*. 10 and 11 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

**JUNE 20:** The SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE Summer Solstice party features a demonstration of lively jigs and reels to fiddle music. 7:45 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 333-9372.

**JUNE 21:** The fourth annual "Take Your DOG TO WORK DAY" is sponsored by the SPCA.

**JUNE 22:** Harriet Miller and Kathie Piccagli ponder "What Is NORMAL AGING?" in a panel discussion at the Older Women's League (OWL). 10:30 am–12:15 pm. Call 989-4422 for location and information.

**JUNE 22:** Dr. Edward Kersh discusses "CHOLESTEROL and Your Heart," from 11 am to noon. St. Luke's Hospital, 3555 Cesar Chavez St. 641-3441.

**JUNE 22:** "Your Right to Remain Silent: Use It!" is a DISCUSSION of what to do if you are stopped by the police, sponsored by the Coalition of Concerned Legal Professionals and the Public Defender's office. 11 am. Main Library, Latino/Hispanic Meeting Room, 100 Larkin St. 557-4400.

**JUNE 22:** A Solstice Art and HEALING FAIR features a raffle and art sale. Noon–6 pm. Psychic Horizons/Church of Natural Grace, 970 Valencia St. 643-8800.

**JUNE 22:** A SUMMER SOLSTICE celebration at Chatterbox runs from 3 to 8 pm. 1195A Church St. 647-0900.

**JUNE 22:** Celebrate Summer Solstice with the San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners at a POTLUCK. Bring dessert or salad to share, and your own plates and utensils; barbecue and beverages provided. 5–7 pm. Garden for the Environment, 7th Ave. at Lawton. 285-7584.

**JUNE 22–JULY 30:** Dimitri Kourouiotis and Kurt Glowieneke exhibit MIXED-MEDIA PAINTINGS and drawings in "Sanctuary of Dreams." Reception with live music and dancers June 22, 7–10 pm. Noe Art Space at Value Vacation, 3901 23rd St. 824-2553.

**JUNE 23:** Mel Clay celebrates the third printing of *Jazz—Jail and God*, a biography of BOB KAUFMAN. 4:30 pm. Bird and Beckett Books and Records, 2788 Diamond St. 586-3733.

**JUNE 24:** LIFE LINE Screening discusses strokes, vascular disease, and osteoporosis. 7 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 282-2317.

**JUNE 25:** S.F. POET LAUREATE Devorah Brown reads from her new novel, *Brown Glass Windows*. 7:30 pm. Modern Times Bookstore, 888 Valencia St. 282-9246.

**JUNE 25:** The San Francisco MERIONETTES synchronized swim team for children ages 6 to 12 welcomes new members. 7:30 pm. Balboa Pool, San Jose at Havelock St. 648-0180.

**JUNE 26:** The BUBBLE LADY will "blow your mind with her bubble magic." 11 am. Mission Library, 300 Bartlett St. 695-5090.

**JUNE 26:** Join the circus for a day when MAKE-A-CIRCUS performs in Dolores Park. 1 pm. 831-2700.

**JUNE 27:** Singer/songwriter LISA ATKINSON leads singalongs for preschoolers at 10 and 11 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

**JUNE 27:** Jayeson Vance discusses San Francisco's COASTAL DEFENSES, Fort Funston, and Alcatraz at a meeting of the S.F. History Association. 7 pm. Mission Dolores School Auditorium, 16th and Church. 750-9986.



"The St. Martin Canal" is one of *Voice* photographer Pamela Gerard's Paris works on display at The French Class gallery, from June 7 through July 10.

**JUNE 15, 22 & 29:** A three-part BOTANICAL DRAWING class at Strybing Arboretum is taught by Michelle Meyer. 11 am–3 pm. Golden Gate Park. Preregister at 661-1316, ext. 354.

**JUNE 28:** An evening of renewal includes CHANTING the Gayatri mantram to awake intuitive powers. 7:30–10 pm. Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St. 821-1117.

**JUNE 29:** The traditional celebration of the 226th BIRTHDAY of San Francisco includes a Mass in the Old Mission at Mission Dolores, music by Coro Hispano, and refreshments. 16th and Dolores St. 621-8203.

**JUNE 29:** The seven moles of Oaxaca are featured at a COOKING CLASS at Encantada Gallery. 10 am–1 pm. 908 Valencia St. Register at 642-3939.

**JUNE 29:** LAPSITS for babies, toddlers, and their parents feature songs, stories, and fingerplays. 10:30 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

**JUNE 29:** The 10th annual San Francisco DYKE MARCH will kick off with speakers and entertainment at 3 pm in Dolores Park. March starts at 7:30 pm and winds up for a party in the Castro at 9:30 pm. 241-8882.

**JUNE 30:** The Gay Pride CELEBRATION and Parade begins at Market and Beale streets at 10:30 am. 864-FREE.

**July Mercy on Broadway,** Laura Nyro once said. We say the July/August edition of the *Voice* will be out on the streets on or before July 1. Please make sure we hear about your event by **June 17.** Our address is *Noe Valley Voice*, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114. Or send an e-mail to [calendar@noevalleyvoice.com](mailto:calendar@noevalleyvoice.com).



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**Women's Health UPDATE**

**Healthy Competition**

(NAPS)—For millions of people, completing a marathon represents the ultimate fitness goal. Now, thanks to the Arthritis Foundation's world-class training program, it's possible to "go the distance" while raising funds to prevent, control, and cure arthritis for the nearly 43 million children and adults with the disease.



Besides improving personal fitness, training for and completing a marathon can now benefit others as well.

Joints in Motion is a program developed by the Arthritis Foundation, with participants receiving tailor-made schedules to walk or run a marathon. Anyone can take part; training is designed to fit the individual, regardless of fitness level. Throughout the program, professional coaches monitor athlete's progress.

By taking part in the program, you get to become part of a team that travels to a world-famous marathon—in locations ranging from Dublin, Ireland, to Honolulu, Hawaii—while raising money for the Arthritis Foundation in honor of someone with the disease. Team members, many of whom are first-time marathoners, receive free airfare to the race, hotel accommodations, marathon entry, private parties, and apparel.

The Arthritis Foundation is the only nationwide health organization helping people take greater control of arthritis by leading efforts to prevent, control, and cure arthritis and related diseases.

For more information about the Joints in Motion Training Team program in your area, call toll-free 1-877-956-4687, or visit the web site at [www.arthritis.org](http://www.arthritis.org).

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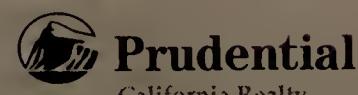
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## Voice Readers Spread the News

Neighbors from San Francisco's coolest part of town can't help but seek out comparisons overseas. All report enjoying their travels and many find pleasant parts of the world that show we don't have everything. But it's good to get back home — if for nothing else than to get a copy of the latest issue.

It's easy to join our communal travelogue. Just mail your photos with a note telling where and when to the Noe Valley Voice, Attn: Readers, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. And, don't forget to include your phone number in case we have trouble with your handwriting. Thanks!



A preschool dream came true for 16-year-old Moira Holland when she took a trip with aunts Kathy McHale and Mary Ruth Gross to Venice, Italy, this March.



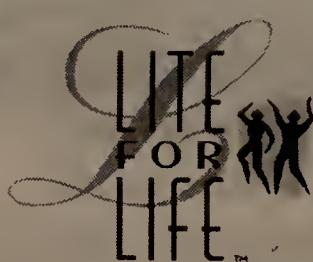
Ellen Harris spent two months traveling in India recently. During the long excursion, she had ample opportunity for a complete read of her hometown paper. The above photo was taken in Rajasthan, where she and her guide Jheetu (and their camels) opted to make a rest stop.



While out for the evening during a recent trip to sleepy Amsterdam in the Netherlands, Noe Valley residents (from left to right) Brian McGrath, Matt Mair, and Brian Baltezonre found themselves longing for the nightlife of 24th Street.



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# STORE TREK

**S**tore Trek is a regular *Voice* feature introducing new shops and businesses in Noe Valley. This month's Store Trek ventures into two Church Street stores where you can buy things for the home. One offers gifts that are new and luxurious; the other a collection of charming curios from yesteryear.

## Willa

**1484 Church Street at 27th Street  
415-641-4936**

In the spot that used to be the Fountain of Youth ice cream parlor is a new kind of fountain, one that is brimming with creature comforts—cozy quilts, scented candles, silk pillows, French soaps, even hand-dipped chocolates.

"People always come in, take a deep breath, and tell me how good it smells in here," says Elena Duggan, who opened her store Willa, on Church Street near 27th, on April 10.

Then they gaze around at a room that is full of beautiful objects. "I tried to really make the shop a feast for the eyes."

Available for feasting (and buying) are a wide range of home and bath accessories. Duggan has stocked Belgian linen kitchen towels (\$12); candles from Geodesis (\$8); French-style quilts (\$100 and up); books about wine, cooking, and traveling (\$16 to \$40); and Michael Recchiuti chocolates in assorted forms, including Key-lime dipped pears (\$6.75).

She carries a selection of table lamps, vintage French patio furniture (\$30 and up), and oversized fruit-picking baskets (3 feet by 2 feet, \$95). "These baskets can really hold a lot!" she says, pointing out the dozen or so throw blankets stored in a basket on display.

The store also offers a glittering array of crystal and rhinestone jewelry, including original pieces by Berkeley artist Annie DeCamp (\$12 and up).

All these items are housed in a small Victorian storefront, which Duggan feels lucky to have found after a yearlong search. "I like this street corner with the big trees," she says. "And when I saw the space, I knew right away that the walls

would look good in blue." An artist friend painted a blue sky with fluffy white clouds on her ceiling.

The shop is named after Duggan's dog Willa, a Yorkie-poodle mix, who sometimes accompanies her to the store.

Though she grew up in the Sunset, Duggan now lives in Noe Valley, on 29th Street. Her father, John Duggan, grew up on Whitney Street and attended school at St. Paul's. "My dad and mom met on Army [now Cesar Chavez] Street, when both of them had friends in the same family, the Gammas."

Before opening Willa, Duggan worked for five years as manager of her parents' restaurant, Original Joe's on Taylor Street. She also earned a business degree with an emphasis in hospitality.

"But I always wanted to open a store of my own, filled with eclectic, unique things for your home," she says.

Duggan notes that several customers have come in, kids in tow, thinking her shop was still the ice cream parlor that closed about a year ago. "The kids tend to roll their eyes and say, 'Oh well, let's go,' but a lot of the moms say something like, 'Hang on a minute, I want to look around!'"

Willa is open Tuesday through Friday, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The shop is closed on Mondays.



Elena Duggan has gifts to please all the senses at Willa, the store she opened in April at Church and 27th Streets. Photos by Beverly Thorp



Be prepared for a blast from the past when you open the door at Nifty Vintique on Church near 30th Street.

## Nifty Vintique

**1767 Church Street at 30th Street  
415-407-6709**

According to Holly Schneider, there are a lot of kitchen items—old pots and pans, for instance—that should never be thrown away. They might have some hidden charm, or they might be fixable and perfectly good to use. They might even have new life as, say, a flowerpot.

Nifty Vintique, Schneider's new store at Church and 30th streets, is a place for such items, most of them made between the turn of the (19th) century and the 1960s. The shop opened on May 11.

"I love the stories of things, everyday things, and how they were used," says Schneider, adding that she's been collecting kitchen and garden stuff since she was 8 years old. Now 35, she has worked for several years as a waitress, photo stylist, and artist. But she always had her heart set on opening a store. "I saved my tips while waiting tables at Calzone's in North Beach for years while looking for a good spot. This place is just right, 360 square feet, for getting my start," she says.

The tiny store is bright and cheerful. "I knew I wanted the walls yellow, and for the place to feel warm and inviting, like my grandma's kitchen—kind of kitschy, kind of homey." The walls are festooned with 1920s kitchen utensils (many with

red wooden handles), colorful china plates, and photographs of people living in times gone by.

A photo of Schneider's grandmother Eleanor has a place of honor. It shows "Gramma El" with a team of other women, all in aprons, standing in a large kitchen. "She was a lunch lady in the school cafeteria!" she says proudly. "Remember them?"

Other items in Nifty Vintique may spark similar nostalgia in customers: salt-and-pepper shakers in the shape of toasters or chickens, \$4 to \$40; 1940s Saltines cracker tins for \$6; travel cases from the '20s and '30s, \$19 and up; a McCoy cookie jar from the '70s, \$59; gingham aprons from the '50s, \$6 to \$10; and a steel worker's box from about 1900, \$78.

Fiesta Ware is still in production, Schneider says, but she only stocks the dishes from the '20s and '30s. "People seem to like the colors from back then."

Schneider also has about a dozen chevron quilts, ranging from \$40 to \$200, and lots of carefully salvaged furniture, linens, toys, and other knickknacks. A sign saying "You've got flowers!" sits atop an old mailbox that has been converted to a planter. A flatiron from the 1920s now functions as a doorstopper.

In a tiny back porch area, Schneider has created a garden filled with potted plants in old steel bins, vintage Coca-Cola wooden crates, and vases made from jelly jars, lard cans, and coffeepots. Prices start at \$10.

Schneider loves researching the history of her treasures. She says she and her buyers, some of whom live on the East Coast, spend hours at auctions and yard sales, chatting with those parting with their antiques. She also looks for clues to an object's age, such as its type of soldering (which told her the steel worker's box was made around the turn of the century).

"You can earn your own degree in history doing this!" she laughs. "And I think most everything here has a soul, a function in our lives."

Nifty Vintique is open Friday through Monday from 11:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Other days Schneider will open by appointment, and hours may be expanded during the summer.

This month's Store Trek was written by Heidi Anderson.

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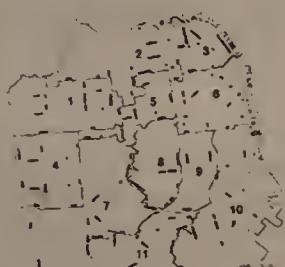
Recent studies have shown that diesel exhaust produces the same health risks as second-hand smoke - health risks such as cancer, asthma and lung disease.<sup>1</sup>

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1. The Lancet, V359, Feb 2, 2002; Journal of American Medicine, V287, March 6, 2002  
2. Scorecard.org, "Counties with Health Risks from Hazardous Air Pollutants"  
3. American Lung Association of CA, "Reducing Public Exposure to Diesel Emissions from Heavy Duty Vehicles", Dec. 9, 2002

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# Let BYLINES Be BYLINES

## My Noe Valley Filoli

By Mary Hower

Nine years ago, when I first saw the overgrown backyard of our fixer-upper house, I felt like a mother falling in love with all the potential of her newborn and overlooking the reality of the hard work ahead. As I scythed my way into shoulder-high crabgrass, I only saw the verdant lawn of the future. Tripping over ivy and scotch broom that invaded every inch, I was sure it would only be a few weeks until my backyard would be another Filoli, the lush formal garden down the Peninsula located on the rolling grounds of an old estate. No matter that blackberry vines strangled the sad Mexican sage and banana cactus. No matter that the only reason my fence hadn't completely fallen over into the neighbor's yard was that a massive wall of ivy anchored it in place.

Ah yes, in just a few weeks, a carpet of bulbs would spring up from under my feet, rose bushes would edge the borders of the yard, and lush ferns would grow profusely in the shaded areas. Soon after escrow closed, I'd send out the invitations, and my guests would lounge here, sipping ice tea and lemonade under umbrella tables and complimenting me on my unique landscaping. Every morning I'd float out in my Gatsby-era white dress and clip tulips and gladiolas for the multitude of vases that would brighten every room of our home.

Blinded by my vision of Filoli II, I tripped over a bamboo hut with no roof that stood camouflaged in the scotch broom. Was there a pit for sacrificing animals, too? And why no roof?

"What's this?" I asked my new neighbor, Al. His introduction that morning had been hastily followed by a plea to fix the fence.

"That's where the old tenants lay out in the sun," Al said.

"But I don't get it—why'd they need these walls around them for sunbathing?"

Al cleared his throat. "Well, I'm not really sure—I mean, I never really saw them, exactly." He looked down at his shoes, avoiding my eyes. "Umm—I think they were naked."

Since I didn't quite have a place for naked sunbathers in my vision of Filoli,



Mary Hower moved to Noe Valley with the dream that her backyard would quickly rival the Filoli Gardens in Woodside. But nine years and many excavations later, she and husband Matthew Jacob, and baby boy Joey, are just thrilled to have a work-in-progress. *Photo by Pamela Gerard*

I ripped the hut out and set it on the curb for hauling. But as I did, I noticed something else. Like Nancy Drew hot on the trail of a mystery, I clued into an array of faded plastic markers strewn at the edges of the yard. "Strawberry," "azalea," and "impatiens," they read. Hmm, those should have grown fine here. Terracotta pots with dirt still in them yawned emptily. What had happened? Why had the previous gardeners failed? Too busy with nude sunbathing?

Nancy Drew soon had her answer a few weeks later when I realized Filoli might need more work than I'd planned. On the recommendation of a savvy friend, I hired Jeannie.

"I'm not really a gardener," Jeannie said. "I mean, I do it for a living, but I'm more an artist—I'll give you a good rate."

Thinking an artist's eye would certainly help with the landscaping, I hired her and sent her to rev up the rototiller. As soon as the blades touched the ground, the rototiller came to a literal grinding halt. It seemed there was a rock.

*Great. I'd stumbled on "The Mystery of the Old Rock Quarry." I wondered how many former gardeners were buried beneath my backyard, dead from trying to pick out the rocks.*

She revved it again. Same grinding halt. It seemed there was another rock.

"Oh yeah," said Al, watching from over the fence, which had fallen over a few more feet. "This whole hill used to be a rock quarry. You can't use a rototiller—have to dig those babies out with a pickaxe."

Great. I'd stumbled on "The Mystery of the Old Rock Quarry." I wondered how many former gardeners were

buried beneath my backyard, dead from trying to pick out the rocks.

"What kind of rock is this?" I asked Al, picking up the red and brown, meteor-sized chunk.

"It's called chit."

I noted the resemblance of the sound of this word to the word alternately known as dog-do.

"This is gonna cost you a few more bucks," said Jeannie, who failed to mention the possibility of circumventing the problem by building raised beds above ground. As I kissed my husband's and my vacation trip to Maui goodbye, Jeannie brought in three more of her artist friends to help out. Not exactly Arnold Schwarzeneggers, the artists took breaks every half-hour for espresso and debates about Diebenkorn and Jim Dine. It would take them months to finish at this rate, so I let them go after they'd made a three-week pass at the yard.

When I corralled my friend Kathryn into helping me dig out more rocks, I guess I left out a few more details. Filoli was starting to fade. Now I just wanted a small space to sit in a wicker chair.

"It'll be great," she said. "I used to garden as a child with my Italian grandfather." Her eyes grew misty. "He had such strong hands."

We started in February. In March, the rosy picture of Grandpa and Kathryn in her yellow sundress and watering can began to disappear when it took us an entire week to pick and shovel out a foot of ground. By April, Kathryn's Hallmark memories had turned into Stephen King nightmares when we hauled out three stubborn tree stumps and a U-haul full of ivy that had lived there decades longer than our oldest neighbor. May followed, with a break to visit our chiropractors.

But we were stubborn or maybe hooked—after all, we were both born under earth signs. In the midsummer fog, Kathryn and I sat down on one of the seven garbage cans of rocks we'd unearthed, panting and wiping sweat from our faces. Just then, a wild whoop went up from the houses and apartments nearby.

"Do you think they're cheering for us?" I asked Kathryn. Her face was entirely streaked with dirt except where sweat had washed tiny rivulets.

"No, I think the Giants just hit a home run." She took a slug of blue Gatorade. "You remember—baseball? The thing normal people do on weekends?"

In our weekday lives, Kathryn was working on a new relationship and trying to decide whether to change careers. I was raising money for a local nonprofit to build new facilities, and I had millions of dollars left to go. It began to seem fitting that we were spending our weekends picking and pulling out rocks.

As if to urge us on, unexpected treasures came to the surface as we dug.

Kathryn unearthed a plastic pre-Barbie doll with no head and a rusted toy gun. We eventually found a yellow toy dump truck and seven rainbow-colored marbles. With each toy, we began to imagine the children who had played there in the yard.

"I wonder if they had blond or brown or black or red hair and what color their eyes were," I said. "I wonder what their names were."

"I wonder if they had to wear down jackets in the summer fog," Kathryn said, shivering.

We found history, too. Old bottles from the turn of the century hinted at scenes of the old quarry workers eating lunch. A 1940s Revlon compact still contained its rouge, and a "Liquid Varnish" bottle was surely the origin of my house's faux-mahogany trim, a style from the '20s and '30s.

That fall, as the yard lay ready for planting, Kathryn's relationship was on track, and she was leaving her clerical job to become a therapist. As for me, the donations had begun to pour in, and other ground had been broken—the new building for my nonprofit was finally going up. Our rocks had taught us to overcome our obstacles, and we had stronger biceps, too. The Giants did fine without us.

This spring, as I walk out in my garden, I carry my new baby boy Joey. My vision of Filoli has transformed into a play area for him, with a little slide and a playhouse. I see us here among the Irish moss, the lavender, santolina, and rosemary that Kathryn and I planted. The good rains have undone the fall drought, and it will be a couple of months before I have to check the watering timer to see if the batteries still work or shoo the spiders from their contented webs amid the curled hose. Crabgrass has edged its way back in along with a dozen dandelions, but the Mexican sage, a survivor from the previous tenants, greets me with its passionate purple flowers. Primroses beckon, their jewel-toned reds, blues, and yellows warmly blanketed in a layer of mulch I'd spread last fall.

And I am thankful again for those rocks. They have taught me patience and persistence. They have shown how to love the process of gardening as much as the end result. Now, as the blooms from the plum trees cover my verdant lawn like snow, I wonder—what lessons await me this year? □

Mary Hower is a writer whose essays have appeared in *Salon.com*, *Three-penny Review*, and *KQED's "Perspectives"*. She also is a fundraiser for nonprofit organizations. Hower reports that her garden is doing well, "especially when I water it."



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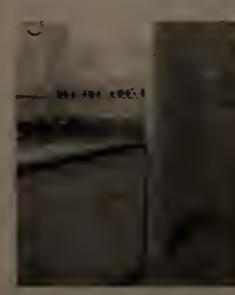
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### Chasing Butterflies

One warm sunny afternoon in 1924, my 3-year-old brother, Warde, and I sat on the front stairs of our Chattanooga Street flat, whiling away the hours. We amused ourselves by sucking on some long-lasting Butterball candies. After savoring the butterscotch until it had completely dissolved in our mouths, we twisted the yellow candy wrappers in the middle so that they resembled butterflies, and we were ready for the game we called "Chasing Butterflies." We tossed the wrappers into the air and chased them up and down the sidewalk. A sudden gust of wind lifted my brother's butterfly and carried it out into the street, and he sped after it, darting between two parked cars and into the path of another one. There was a screech of brakes, a dull thud, and then a little boy lying motionless on the pavement.

I'll always remember the next few terrible days, because Warde, who had suffered a fractured skull, remained unconscious in the hospital for what seemed like an eternity to his 5-year-old sister. Since children were not allowed at the hospital, I would sit alone in the parlor of our house every afternoon while my mother went to visit him. On a table in our front room was a metal

casting of a weary American Indian seated on a tired horse. It was called "The End of the Trail." I usually enjoyed looking at this souvenir from the 1917 Panama-Pacific International Exposition, but during those anxiety-filled hours of waiting, the Indian made me feel even sadder. Through the window the sinking sun sent a shaft of light into the dim room, illuminating thousands of tiny particles that floated slowly in the air.

On the third day following the accident, that gloomy moment was suddenly transformed. The front door opened and my mother called out happily, "Warde is awake!" As the door opened, a current of air sent the bright particles in the shaft of light into wild motion, circling and tumbling through the air as if they were celebrating the good news. Happiness had returned to our home. When asked how he liked the hospital, Warde had said, "I like it. They give me ice cream!"

Within a month of the accident, my little brother had recovered completely. Still, Mother and Father thought it wise to move to a house on an unpaved street west of Glen Park, where we "country-bred" children could run freely over the grassy hills and chase real butterflies.

Because our working parents were away during the day, we enjoyed a great deal of freedom as children, especially when we got a bit older. Our father was a strict disciplinarian, our mother more lenient. But they both expected us to abide by the rules they'd laid down for proper behavior in their absence. We generally obeyed. However, we did not always divulge the extent of our wanderings.

Soon Warde and I began venturing farther and farther from home. On one trek, we discovered a cave about 15 feet



deep, set into the western slope of Glen Canyon. We entered the cave excitedly, expecting to find gold, just like in the movies! Of course we found nothing, and 20 years later I learned from Grandpa Holub, who had worked in the Grass Valley mines, that gold is found in quartz deposits, not in the local "rotten rock," as it is sometimes called. After Glen Canyon was excavated in the late 1920s to make way for O'Shaughnessy Boulevard, the cave vanished in the rubble.

Another time, we plodded all the way up to Mount Davidson, the highest point in San Francisco, where a huge wooden cross rose about a hundred feet. At the base of the cross was a small door, and upon closer inspection we found it to be slightly ajar, its lock broken. Our curiosity piqued, we entered the dark interior of the cross, which was empty except for a ladder that went straight up.

Being young and fearless, Warde and I began to climb the wooden rungs. Going up was not difficult, and before long we were standing on a floor within the arms of the cross. The view out the knotholes was breathtaking.

But the climb back down the ladder was truly frightening. While clutching

tightly to the rungs with our hands, we had to blindly feel our way down with our feet. When we finally touched solid ground, we were filled with relief. Needless to say, this excursion remained top-secret.

The wooden cross was destroyed about a decade later in the '30s, when a gang of adolescents set fire to it and burned it to the ground. The arsonists were never apprehended. However, we all noticed one young man (usually a good kid) whose hand was burned and bandaged after the event but who refused to talk about it. By the following Easter, a new fireproof, cast-concrete cross was erected on the same spot. This cross still stands today.

We spent the rest of our growing-up years far from the urban hustle and bustle, but periodically revisited the Noe Valley attractions—the library on Jersey Street, the Finn Hall on Hoffman, the Noe Theater on 24th Street.

And when it came time to choose a permanent home, I returned to the neighborhood of my early childhood. My man Leo and I settled into a house on the 21st Street hill, where we continue to watch the butterflies fluttering about in our garden. □



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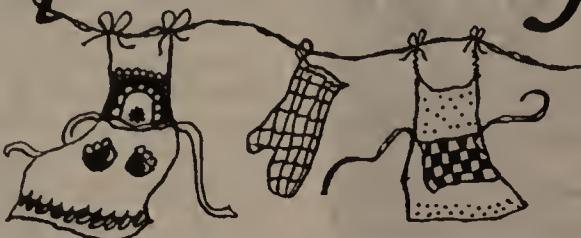
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At the Berkeley Adventure Playground

By Janis Cooke Newman

The Berkeley Adventure Playground isn't so much a park as a hippie commune populated by an industrious collective of people under four feet tall. The moment my son Alex and I pass through the gate of this bayside playground, we're surrounded by the hammering of kids nailing together the sides and tops of enough wooden shacks to house an entire utopian community.

Near a homemade picnic table, a little girl with a sun hat floating atop her Afro is drawing a peace sign on the side of a ramshackle clubhouse. Beside a makeshift bench, a boy in a tie-dyed T-shirt is painting the front of a lopsided fort a psychedelic mix of lavender and blue. Everywhere we look, kids with



Kids have a blast at Berkeley's do-it-yourself Adventure Playground, where they can trade recycling and cleanup chores for hammer and nails and a fresh can of paint.

hammers and paint are busy creating their version of the ideal playground.

The Berkeley Adventure Playground features no ergonomically designed monkey bars, no safety-tested climbing structures. Instead, it's filled with drunken docks, staircases that lead nowhere, wooden platforms with splintered risers, and a true sense of anarchy—which isn't surprising in a playground that was built by kids, not lawyers.

"Grownups assemble the bones of these structures," explains Denise Brown, the playground's supervisor, "and the kids put on the skins." It's an idea that was born in the '70s, when playground designers noticed that kids would rather play in the rubble left over from building new playgrounds than in the playgrounds themselves.

"What the kids liked was being able to change their environment by building things," says Brown.

During that less-litigious decade, designers took this idea and built adventure playgrounds all over Europe and America—playgrounds that gave kids hammers, nails, and the opportunity to alter their environment as much as they wanted. The Berkeley Adventure Playground, built in 1978, is one of the last of these kid utopias left in the U.S.

"I want a hammer," Alex tells me. "How do I get some paint?"

Like any good communal model, the Adventure Playground encourages a collective sense of responsibility. Kids get hammers and paint and nails by searching the playground and turning in either 10 nails, five wood splinters, five pieces of trash, or one Mr. Dangerous.

"What's a Mr. Dangerous?" I ask one of the playground employees, a man wearing overalls and a Vietnamese straw hat.

"This," he says, holding up a piece of wood with the sharp end of a nail sticking out of it.

Alex collects five cellophane wrappings from juice-box straws and heads off with a hammer and a can of chartreuse paint, while I wander the playground.

The Adventure Playground is not just about building things. There are also plenty of structures that are pure play: a fat-rope spider web, a climbing wall made from suspended tires, a rope



The Trolley is one of the top attractions at Berkeley Adventure Playground. But be prepared to land in a sandpile.

Photos by Ken Newman

bridge, a tire swing, even a 15-foot scalloped piling cushioned with tires.

And then there's the Trolley, a speedy zip line that whizzes riders from a six-foot-high platform to a less-than-graceful landing in a small mountain of sand.

"You always wind up with sand in your underwear," Alex informs me.

Kids have to be at least 6 years old to ride the Trolley, but there's no upper age limit. And while I stand watching, a mom climbs onto the Trolley's wooden seat, tucks her sari demurely around her legs, and flies through the air, her gold-threaded scarf sailing out behind her.

But no matter how much time kids spend tightrope-walking across the rope bridge or pretending to be Spider-Man on the giant web, eventually they all seem to find their way to a hammer and a piece of wood.

Near the back fence, I watch a girl with a head full of braids nail what looks like a wooden pepperoni pizza above a doorway, oblivious to her grandmother turning the pages of a wig catalog behind her. Over by a patch of seaside daisies, I spot a small boy covering a wood horse with blue paint, ignoring his mother who sits on a beached boat holding his forgotten balloon.

"Look at this!" Alex is holding a

nailed-together piece of wood that could qualify as a Mr. Dangerous.

"It's terrific," I say. "What is it?"

"Frankenstein's head. I'm going to paint it purple."

"The Adventure Playground is always changing," Denise Brown tells me. "We're always taking apart the old things, and the kids are always building something new. Every time you come back, it's a whole different scene."

What could be more '70s than that? □

*Janis Cooke Newman's memoir, The Russian Word for Snow, is available in paperback at Cover to Cover Book-sellers on 24th Street.*

**Go Play in Berkeley**

The Berkeley Adventure Playground is open Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays during the school year, and every day in the summer. Admission is free for kids with adults. For a \$5 fee, parents can leave children 7 and older in the playground without an adult for up to three hours. This summer, the playground is offering special staff-supervised activities that include fishing, magic shows, sandcastle building, and of course, tie-dyeing. For more information, call 510-644-8623 or visit the web site [www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/marinaexp/adventplgd.html](http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/marina/marinaexp/adventplgd.html).

**Getting There:** In Berkeley, take University Avenue west into the Marina, bearing left where the road forks. The playground is at the west end of the parking lot.

**Lunch:** Just outside the playground are picnic tables where you can sit and watch the windsurfers flit across the bay. On your way to the playground, be sure to stop at Seabreeze Market (598 University Avenue), where they sell everything from lattés and smoothies to catfish sandwiches and steamed garlic crab.

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In 1993, great blue herons began nesting in the trees around Stow Lake in Golden Gate Park. On June 1, 8, and 15, families can join Nancy DeStefanis, director of San Francisco Nature Education, for a Saturday morning walk around the lake to visit the nests and see the baby herons.

Be at the Stow Lake boathouse by 11:30 a.m. and follow the signs to the explainer's station. If you miss the walk, you can still see the herons. DeStefanis will have a high-powered spotting scope trained on a heron nest near the boathouse from 10:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. The walk and the viewing are free.

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# BOOKS in our BRANCH

This month's new books list, written by librarians Roberta Greifer and Carol Small, features a profile of the Kennedy family during World War II, stories about libraries, and a look at how detectives work. To find out if a book is available, call 695-5095 or visit the Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Library at 451 Jersey Street near Castro. Besides books, the branch offers videos, DVDs, magazines, CDs, and the archives and index to the *Noe Valley Voice*. It also has a women's literature section, a collection of books in Spanish, and subscriptions to the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *USA Today*, among others. Hours are Tuesdays, 10 to 9; Wednesdays, 1 to 9; Thursdays, 10 to 6; Fridays, 1 to 6; and Saturdays, 10 to 6.

## Adult Fiction

- ❖ In *Dying to Please* by Linda Howard, a butler/bodyguard falls for her employer, then is pulled into a vortex of murder, first as a suspect, then as a target.
- ❖ Michael Connelly's thriller *City of Bones* revisits detective Harry Bosch, when a chance discovery reignites a "cold case" and has all of Los Angeles in an uproar.
- ❖ In *The Stacks: Short Stories About Libraries and Librarians*, edited by librarian and author Michael Cart, features 19 stories by authors as varied as Isaac Babel, Ray Bradbury, and Alice Munro.
- ❖ Donald Westlake's latest, *Put a Lid on It*, introduces a small-time crook recruited for the simple task of keeping evidence secret until an election. Dirty tricks and loose lips abound in this farcical swipe at Washington politics.



## Adult Nonfiction

- ❖ An eye-opening look at the 19th century in Europe and America, *Inventing the Victorians* by Matthew Sweet debunks many of the false assumptions we have about the era.
- ❖ Edward Renehan's *The Kennedys at War, 1937-1945* profiles America's first family during their years in London, when the younger generation comes of age and tragedy first begins to haunt the family.
- ❖ *Women Are Not Small Men*, by Nieca Goldberg, M.D., is an up-to-date guide to preventing and healing heart disease in women.

*Annotations by Roberta Greifer  
Head Librarian, Noe Valley Branch*

## Library Activities

### Summer Reading Club

- ❖ This year's vacation reading club theme is "Reading Road Trip, U.S.A." Prizes will be awarded for reading accomplished between June 8 and Aug. 10; visit the library for details.

### Sing-Along

- ❖ Award-winning singer/songwriter Lisa Atkinson performs a musical program for kids preschool-age and up, at 10 and 11 a.m. on Thursday, June 27.

*Unless otherwise noted, events are at the Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Library, 451 Jersey St. • 695-5095*

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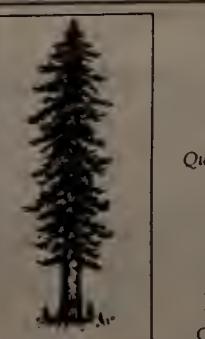
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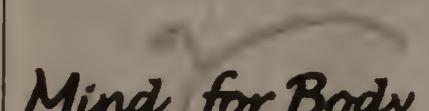


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**Advocates for Upper Noe Rec Center**

Contact: Greg Clark, 826-6222  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 31869, San Francisco, CA 94131-0869  
Meetings: First Tuesday of month, in the auditorium at Upper Noe Rec Center, Day & Sanchez, 7 p.m.

**Castro Area Planning + Action**

Contact: Linton Stables, 541-0344, ext. 230; [capa@home4us.org](mailto:capa@home4us.org)  
Meetings: Second Thursday of month, Eureka Valley Recreation Center, 100 Collingwood St., 7:30 p.m.

**Cesar Chavez Neighborhood Association**

Contact: Mike Moberg, 647-1330  
Mailing Address: First Church of God, 3728 Cesar Chavez St., San Francisco, CA 94110  
Meetings: Call for details.

**Diamond Heights Community Association**

Contact: Betsy Eddy, 239-5776  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 31529, San Francisco, CA 94131  
Meetings: First Thursday of month, 7:30 p.m. Call for location.

**Dolores Heights Improvement Club**

Contact: Amy Powell, 647-4228  
Mailing Address: 3732 21st St., San Francisco, CA 94114  
Meetings: Bimonthly board meetings; membership meetings semi-annually. Call for details.

**Duncan Newburg Association (DNA)**

Contact: Keith Eickman, 282-8988; Evelyn Martin, 826-6734; Deanna Mooney, 821-4045  
Mailing Address: 560 Duncan St., San Francisco, CA 94131  
Meetings: Held periodically. Call for details.

**East & West of Castro Street Improvement Club**

Contact: Paul Kantus, 647-3753  
Mailing Address: 492 Douglass St., San Francisco, CA 94114  
Meetings: First Wednesday of month, Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St., 7:30 p.m.  
Call for summer holiday schedule.

**Eureka Valley Promotion Association**

Contact: Lion Barnett, 255-3624  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 14137, San Francisco, CA 94114  
Meetings: Third Thursday of every month (except December), Eureka Valley Recreation Center, 100 Collingwood St., 7:30 p.m.

**Fair Oaks Neighbors**

Contact: Pam Coxson, 648-4977  
Mailing Address: 25 Fair Oaks St., San Francisco, CA 94110  
Meetings: Call for details. The annual Fair Oaks Street Fair is always held the day before Mother's Day.



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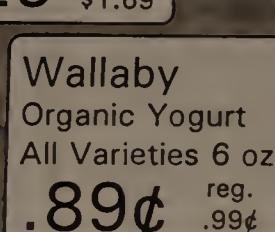
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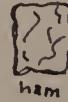
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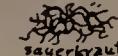
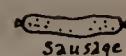
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# CLASS ADS

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**Tired of Feeling Sick and Tired?** If you are concerned about your relationship with drugs/alcohol, please call Blair Drummond, Board Certified Alcohol and Drug Specialist, for confidential assessment, 441-2323.

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**IT'S EASY.** Just type or print the text of your ad, multiply the number of words by **40¢ A WORD**, and send us a check or money order for the total amount. (Note that a phone number, including area code, counts as just one word.)

Then mail your ad copy and check, made out to the *Noe Valley Voice*, so that we receive it by the **15TH OF THE MONTH** before the month you'd like to advertise in. The address is *Noe Valley Voice* Class Ads, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. (Sorry, the *Voice* is unable to accept Class Ads by phone or e-mail at this time.)

**10 FOR 10 DISCOUNT:** The *Noe Valley Voice* publishes a news edition 10 months a year. (We're on vacation in January and August.) If you place the same class ad in 10 issues, you are entitled to a 10 percent discount. To figure your cost, deduct 10 percent from the total amount due for 10 issues.

Note: The next *Voice* will be the July/August 2002 issue, distributed in Noe Valley for two months starting July 1. This issue's deadline for Class Ads is **JUNE 17, 2002**.

Class Ads are printed in the paper and then displayed on our web site ([www.noevilly voice.com](http://www.noevilly voice.com)) typically for just one month.

Class advertisers should keep in mind that only the first few words of the ad (not to exceed one line of type) will be set in bold. Also, receipts and tear sheets will be provided only if your order is accompanied by an SASE. Thank you.

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**Solstice Art and Healing Fair!** Saturday, June 22, noon to 6 p.m. Huge art sale and raffle, healings, and refreshments. Psychics Horizons/Church of Natural Grace, 970 Valencia St. Call for information, 415-643-8800.

**Laughing Meditation.** This fun workshop involves some Hatha Yoga poses, extended conscious laughter, followed by a silent meditation. Dress for Hatha Yoga, bring a towel, and expect to have a wonderful, fun time. Tuesday, June 18, 6 to 7:30 p.m. \$9. Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St. 415-821-1117.

**Psychotherapy Office:** large, comfortable, delightful room in duplex with other health professionals, in the heart of Noe Valley. Sand tray, shared kitchen, and waiting room. Available Monday and Tuesday until 2 p.m., Wednesday to 7 p.m., Saturday

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and now for the  
**RUMORS**  
behind the news

## Noe Thing Doing

By Mazook

THUMPER WAS THE STUMPER: My frugal editors send thanks to all of you who chose not to enter last month's Rumors Quiz. No one was able to claim the grand prize of toothpicks from Herb's Fine Foods. Just to make you feel bad, the toothpick prize would have been preceded by a roast beef au jus dinner for four at Noe Valley's oldest diner, which could have run into tens of dollars, including tip.

Anyway, noe one won, although some of you came close. As for the questions and answers, in descending order:

**5. What year was the East & West of Castro Street Improvement Club formed?** As every reader of the club's monthly newsletter knows (from its banner), East & West has been "In Existence Since 1904."

**4. Where was the original Hopwell's Restaurant located?** That would have been on the northeast corner of 24th and Douglass streets, where the Animal Company sits now. In 1970, Hopwell's moved down 24th Street next to Noe Valley's only public parking lot. Hopwell's closed over a year ago, and the site is now occupied by Le Zinc restaurant.

**3. What was Herb's Fine Foods originally called when it opened in 1943?** Why, anyone who's been reading "The Last 25 Years" on the back page of the *Voice* will know the place was first called the X from Noe, because it was directly across 24th Street from the old Noe Theater. Herb Gaines took over the soda fountain in 1945 and changed its name to his own in 1953.

**2. Who was the first president of Friends of Noe Valley?** Claire Pilcher, of course. Friends was founded in her Hoffman Avenue living room back in 1971.

**1. Name the longtime Noe Valley resident who was the voice of that ancient 1950s TV cartoon character Crusader Rabbit.** This was the stumper for most of you. Her name is Lucille Bliss, and she has lived on Noe Street for almost 40 years. "It was the first animated series on primetime television in New York. We started in October of 1950 on NBC," Bliss says proudly, "and I have been doing voice-overs ever since."

Bliss also was the voice of Smurfette in the animated series *The Smurfs*, which ran from 1981 to 1990. She won't say her age, but some quick math might lead you to believe she's retired. No way! She is currently working on a new TV video game produced by George Lucas called "Bounty Hunter," scheduled for release in December 2002. Bliss will have the lead in that one too, as the voice of a female character named Razetta.



**AW, SHUCKS:** In the "we're the greatest" department, Noe Valley was voted Best Neighborhood by the readers of the *San Francisco Weekly* in the May 15 special issue, "Best of San Francisco 2002." Some smart folks read that journal. The readers polled by the *Weekly* also named several local stores as the best places to go.

Readers named Ambiance, which has its main store in the Haight but a popular satellite on 24th Street, the city's best women's clothing store. They thought Eric's on Church Street was the best Chinese restaurant in the city, tied with Eliza's. Miss Millie's, on 24th just above Castro, tied with Mama's on Washington

### ZIPPY



### "FREE SPEECH IMPEDIMENT"



### BILL GRIFFITH



Square for serving the Best Weekend Brunch in San Francisco.

The editors of the *S.F. Weekly* picked Martha & Brothers Coffee Company for Best Coffee in the City. Martha Guerrero Monroy opened her first coffeehouse on 24th Street back in 1987, across from what was then Dan's Gas and Diesel. The *Weekly* editors rhapsodized, "Martha's daily brew is rich, thick, earthy, and strong enough to merit checking your health insurance for ulcer coverage. It's good. It's damn good. If there were a Martha & Brothers on every corner, Starbucks wouldn't stand a chance." Here, here.

Of course, up at Noe and 24th there is indeed a Starbucks, which is also damn busy. Tully's too. Savor steams up a mean latte, and so does Diamond Corner. Folks are sipping French Roast at Le Zinc. The coffeepots are even rattling at Herb's in the morning. Do other neighborhoods drink this much coffee?

In the Best Breakfast Counter category, the choice was based on the premise that "lonesome curmudgeons have to eat breakfast, too." The *Weekly* explained, "[I]f they want to be left alone while they scarf up a stack of moist pancakes or a pair of eggs cooked exactly as ordered over the Sunday *New York Times*, they'd be wise to check out the breakfast counter at Herb's Fine Foods in Noe Valley." Herb's, not exactly renowned for its coffee, is packed on the weekends with the serious egg, sausage, and hash-brown crowd. Coffee is merely a side dish.

In the Best Attempt at a Bagel category, Noe Bagels was the big winner. Sayeth the *Weekly* purists: "The best attempt at a bagel in San Francisco is the outstanding sourdough round-bread-with-a-hole-in-the-middle at Noe Bagels." Me? I like the jalapeño bagel, well-toasted and buttered and covered with jalapeño spread.

The Ark, at 24th and Vicksburg, was designated as Best Place to Buy a Toy That Doesn't Require Batteries. The awards committee noted, "The Ark offers old-fashioned playthings like magic sets, science kits, musical instruments, those always endearing Brio train sets, and a menagerie of wooden animals to top it all off."



**SUPERMARKET SWEEP:** Big Glen Park news should break on the evening of June 27, when the San Francisco Planning Commission votes on the neighborhood's plan to replace its beloved Diamond Super/Terry's Meats grocery, which burned down one cold November night in 1998.

The plan is to build a structure that will house the supermarket on the ground floor, the Glen Park Branch Library on the floor above, and 15 residential units at the back of the lot on Diamond Street. The project most likely will pass, just because so many people are lined up behind it.

"It has been a truly amazing process," says Zoanne Nordstrom, president of the 240-member Glen Park Association (GPA). "When our neighborhood grocery store burnt to the ground, we waited to see what would happen. Then Walgreen's came forward with a plan to pay \$15,000 per month, which got our group very in-

volved to make sure everyone in town knew we wanted to have a supermarket-size grocery store and with a meat, fish, and poultry counter."

GPA got busy. They started with petitions in the streets, joined forces with the Noe Valley Merchants Association, contacted the East & West of Castro Club, Friends of Noe Valley, and Upper Noe Neighbors, among others, for help.

About two years ago, an anonymous Glen Parker put up the money to buy the property and formed a limited liability company in which to take title. (For the record, the owner is Glen Park Marketplace Phoenix, L.L.C.) Committees and task forces were formed comprised of project managers, architects, finance people, librarians, mothers, and politicians.

GPA most recently announced that the Mogannam family, who has run the 62-year-old Bi-Rite Market near Dolores Park (3639 18th Street) since 1964, has agreed to own and operate the new 6,500 sq. ft. supermarket. Brothers Sam, a Glen Park resident for the last two years, and Raphael will co-own the store.

"We are thrilled that they have agreed to join us," says project manager David

Prowler. "The Mogannam brothers are excited, and everyone in the community should also be excited since Sam and Raphael make a lot of their own products (the desserts are tops), and were voted by *Bon Apétit* magazine as one of the top 100 small grocery stores in the United States."

According to Prowler, if the plans are approved this month, construction should start at the beginning of next year and be completed by the spring of 2004.

Nordstrom promises that many of the GPA members will show up at City Planning to express their support. The word is sure to get out, since the GPA's monthly newsletter, *The Glen Park News*, is hand-delivered every month to each of 2,500 addresses in central Glen Park.



**GOT YOUR CHOPS DOWN:** Down at Church and 29th streets, people have been pondering the fate of Drewes Meat Market (and Stellings Market, which shares the store space), since the dreaded For Sale sign went up over a month ago.

But a deal is pending that would allow

CONTINUED ON PAGE 50



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# RUMORS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 49

the two markets to continue operating under the same roof well into the future. The Drewes family opened its butcher shop at that location in 1888. They sold the business and the building in 1945 to Phil Tomasello, who operated Drewes until he retired in 1984. Tomasello then sold the business to Dave McCarroll, who ran it for over 12 years before he quit the business. Drewes wound up in the hands of the butcher brothers Josh and Isaac Epple, who had worked for McCarroll. Now they call themselves the Drewes Brothers.

As for the sold sign on Star Bakery across the street from Drewes, it looks as if that space will be used for the first time since 1888 as something other than a bakery. The word is that a physical fitness/therapy clinic will soon be seeking permits to remodel the space. Maybe the new owners could leave Star's deco sign up and call it Star Fitness or Heavenly Bodies.

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**COTTON BASIC MATH:** Store division is what casual clothes purveyor Cotton Basics will be doing this month, as Curve Appeal, its newest store — catering to women sizes 14 to 24 — hangs its shingle

in front of 3989 24th Street and joins the Workwear men's store in the space.

"We'll have two stores within a single storefront," says Kay Lamming, who manages Workwear as well as her flagship Cotton Basics at Castro and 24th. "They'll be clearly delineated, but use the same cash register."

Lamming says Curve Appeal's new plus-size line, which will be similar in style to the clothes at Cotton Basics, has been a long time coming. "We've had a strong demand for quite a while for larger sizes," she says, "and we've tried to carry a few items here and there in Cotton Basics, but there was never enough room for an entire line. Everyone I've told about the store is really anxious for it to open," she adds, "including me, because I can't fit into a lot of the sizes we sell at Cotton Basics either."

Cotton Basics will manufacture all of the merchandise for Curve Appeal out of its Oakland factory. The small chain — it has stores in Berkeley and Oakland — opened its first store in 1982 in the 24th Street space now filled with Lit'l Lizards (X from Bell Market). Back then it was called Cotton & Company. Lamming moved up to the corner of Castro in 1990.

"We started this business with a cigar box as our cash drawer," Lamming remembers, "and now we have our own factory and four stores." Make that five!

THAT'S THIRTY for now, folks. □

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**GETTING DOWN ON THE JOB.** Jerry Ferraz serenaded a PG&E crew toiling at the corner of 21st and Douglass streets last spring. "I'm a wandering minstrel. Been at it over 30 years ... just in San Francisco," he says. There was no report on whether the music made the day's work any easier.

Photo by Steve Symanovich

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## TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

2002

In celebration of our 25th year in print, the Noe Valley Voice is taking a look back at the people, places, and events that have made Noe Valley unique. We hope you enjoy this personal tale about the oldest home in Noe Valley.

## MY FAMILY FARM

BY SUZANNE GIROT

**Y**OU WERE THE FOURTH GENERATION BORN HERE," my dad tells me as he points to the Victorian house behind him. Too bad I don't still live here, I think. Nestled halfway down the 23rd Street hill between Church and Chattanooga, my ancestral home is the oldest house in Noe Valley.\*

I pan my video camera from my dad up to the northwest wing of the house. My room. Tall windows look out from 13-foot-high ceilings; a new paint job in hues of putty and sage sparkles in the noonday sun; magenta bougainvillea climbs up the front of the house. Our old family farm looks like several million dollars.

As part of my family history project, I'm filming my 85-year-old dad in front of all the San Francisco houses that were built and inhabited by our ancestors. When I interviewed him at his dad's birthplace, a house at 1117 Church Street that was built by my great-grandfather Stephen Girot, we discovered a brass plaque above the doorbell, *The Girot House, 1888*. People want to know the history of their homes, even if it's someone else's history. My family no longer lives there, but their stories will live on in videotape.

Most people document their genealogy in writing; my medium is video. I shout questions at my dad and film his responses. Not only do I get my dad's voice, I record his facial expressions, his gestures. His face brightens as he recalls his childhood:

"I remember being awakened every day at 5:30 by the paperboy. He had a wagon with metal wheels; it chattered all the way down the hill on the corrugated sidewalk." My dad points to the ridged concrete under our feet. It's still here, the same sidewalk he walked on.

Out in front of Uncle Lex and Aunt Virginia's house on Sanchez Street, I film my dad's remembrances four times.

"I'm standing in front of my great uncle and aunt's house," Dad begins. A fire siren grows louder as it roars up Sanchez Street.

"Cut," I yell.

We start again. "Aunt Virginia and Uncle Lex lived here—they weren't actually my aunt and uncle."

The front door of Aunt Virginia and Uncle Lex's house opens and a woman emerges with a broom and starts sweeping the front stairs. We wait until she finishes.

"Start again," I bark at my dad.

We film the scene twice more.

\*In "On the Trail of Noe Valley's Oldest House" and "Oldest House II," published in the May and June 1983 issues, Noe Valley Voice writer and historian Larry Beresford theorized that the oldest surviving house in Noe Valley was the former Girot home at 3780 23rd Street.



Suzanne Girot's ancestral home was built in the late 1860s by her great-great-grandfather George Pracy in the area of present-day Church Street. In 1900, the house was moved a short distance down the hill—to 3780 23rd Street—to make way for the J-line.



The Schneider family, circa 1887, from left to right: Ella, George, Nicholas, Mary, Amelia, Charlotte, and Nicholas Sr. Daughter Charlotte (Suzanne Girot's grandmother) grew up in the home and eventually settled there with her husband and gave birth to her son George (Suzanne Girot's father) in an upstairs bedroom. Photos courtesy of George Girot

**B**ACK AT THE FAMILY FARM on 23rd Street, my dad continues his living history.

"This house was built by my great-grandfather, George Pracy. He acquired the property and several more acres in the Noe Valley in the 1860s."

He holds up an old photo to the camera.

"You can see that this part of San Francisco was completely undeveloped. In this photo from 1868, the house is standing alone in open fields. It was a farm with a stable for horses. Pracy was quite a horseman. He retired at 40 from his job as a machinist and lived another 40 years riding horses with his old cronies."

My camera scans the photograph—the barn, silo, water tank, windmill, the big house.

"George Pracy's daughter, my grandmother, was widowed with five small children, one of whom was my mother. They moved into this house and my mother grew up here. She went to Mission High School in the late 1890s. When she married my father, they settled here. I was born up in that room." He points to another upstairs bedroom.

"We had a great life back then. So civilized compared with today. I can remember my mother doing her shopping by telephone. She'd call Mike the produce guy on 24th Street and ask him what was good that day. 'Send me some green beans and potatoes,' she'd say. Then she'd call the butcher and have the meat delivered. And she called the little grocery store on 22nd and Chattanooga and they'd deliver. It was better than Webvan."

"There's the parlor where Aunt Meila called the family together during the 1906 earthquake." He points to a downstairs room that faces on 23rd Street. In a sweeping gesture with his arms, Dad puts on his falsetto voice: "Come, everyone, we'll all die together. It's the end of the world." Of course, that was before my time. The house wasn't damaged; it didn't even lose a fireplace. Old Man Pracy built it right."

"Let's take a walk down the alley," I suggest, pulling the camera off its tripod and continuing to shoot hand-held. Following my dad, I am overcome by the sight of him, his white hair blowing in the breeze, his cautious steps. He's an old man now. The best memories of his life reside in this house, in this backyard, lush with the foliage of banana trees, wild rosemary, and redwoods.

"I planted that redwood tree in 1932," he points to a tall, straight tree.

My dad's the last one. The ghosts of his ancestors are all here.

My own memories of living in this house are different from my dad's. For me, the house was a spooky place.

We had seven fireplaces, originally the only source of heat. Imagine my confusion at Christmas—I never knew which fireplace to hang my stocking—which chimney Santa would come down.

The house was so big that we occupied only half of it—my brother, parents, and I lived upstairs, and my grandfather lived downstairs. The downstairs had several vacant rooms full of bulky, dark furniture. Everything was old. The light fixture in my bedroom, suspended from the high ceiling, had gone from candles in the 1860s to gas to electricity. Many of the rooms were paneled in dark mahogany, furthering the illusion of creepiness.

**W**E MOVED AWAY when I was 7, my dad 35. I couldn't wait to leave the old place, the site of my wolf nightmares. My wolf visited me often in that room with the sandy-brick fireplace and swinging chandelier. She ascended the curved staircase from the murky depths below, striking terror in my childhood heart. I left her behind with the other ghosts.

But today in the lush backyard where I played as a child, I feel connected to the generations of my ancestors who were here before me—the Pracs, Schneiders, Girots. It's all right that we no longer own the house. I can walk down this alley any time and listen to the echoes of my family. One day I'll visit my dad here too.

Suzanne Girot is a video producer and freelance writer, living in Greenbrae, California.